DONOVAN A GIFT FROM HIM TO US 1964-84 CHANGING TIMES AND SCENES

SHINDIG!

BIG STAR

our best of 2023

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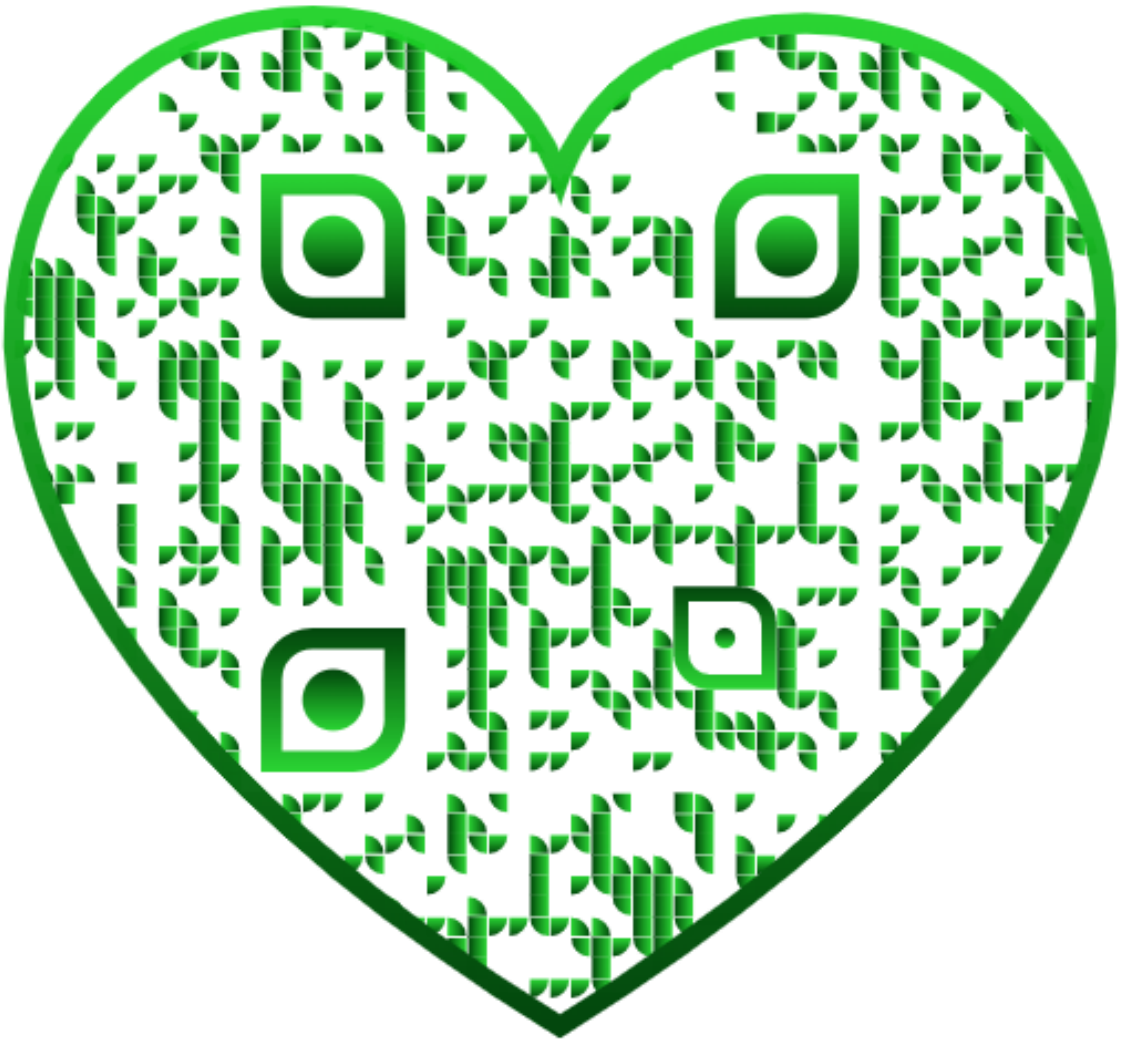

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FRONT COVER PHOTO BY WILLIAM EGGLESTON, EGGLESTON ARTISTIC TRUST

SHINDIG!

welcome

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FINSBURY PARK

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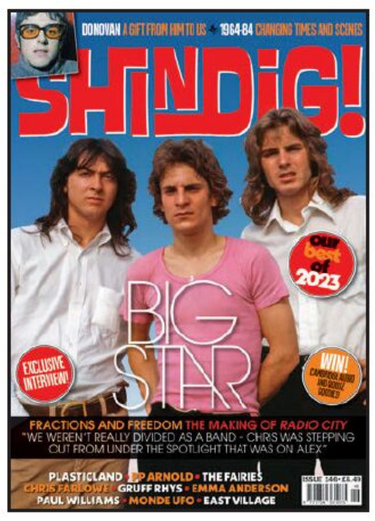

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Season's Greetings,

Man, we're living through some particularly nasty times, even by the standards of the blighted 21st century. Ringo and his peace 'n' love signs are truly needed more than ever. Bar a few Shindiggin' playlist entries however, we haven't really gone to town with the Crimbo themes this issue. All subscribers can access our digital archive for previous December editions though, they're filled with festive cheer.

Our focus this month is on the 20 years that changed popular music. The pivotal year 1964 is now 60 years behind us, and historical. From then through to '84, music and fashion progressed unbelievably fast, far quicker than we have seen in the last 30 years. Trends came and went, but it is fascinating to consider how they constantly borrowed from the past and adapted. Big Star, and likeminded acts now deemed powerpop, were undeniably of their time, token long-haired rock bands. But take 'September Gurls' and its chiming guitars. That was a sound which unashamedly echoed what had happened 10 years earlier. Glam loved rock 'n' roll. New-wave borrowed the iconography of mid-60s groups, and the Sheffield acts of the late '70s looked back to dystopian Kosmiche and krautrock. By the mid-80s synth bands lost their way, becoming homogenised, the charts became dull, and pop had lost its way. Meanwhile, bands from Plasticland to The Prisoners looked back, and by the following decade indie bands had few other options than to do the same. Sure, our introductory essay and 64-74-84 articles just touch the tip of the iceberg, but we hope you enjoy the coverage. Please let us know your own particular fave bands and records from this time frame. Likewise, what do you think we have missed in our best of 2023? Your opinions matter. The best comments will be featured in next month's letters page.

Right, it's probably time to get shopping, meet friends for drinks, and have a good time. Hopefully your nearest and dearest get you some nice records. If you're buying friends and family music, do support your local vinyl emporium. They need your business. And it's still not too late to spring a year's subscription to *Shindig!* on that special someone either.

Happy Xmas, see you in 2024.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills,
Editor-In-Chief

Shindig! recommend using the hi-fi gear of their media partners and sponsors. Left to right: Pro-Ject X2 turntable (bit.ly/3FzsvhV), Cambridge Audio EVO 150 (bit.ly/3qEUusx), EVO CD (bit.ly/462l6mz), and JBL L82s (bit.ly/3X7m3XA). This is a supreme hassle-free system for vinyl, CD, high-res streaming. We will be working very closely with Cambridge Audio moving forward, so watch this space. We use Chord cables (bit.ly/3sbhbp7)

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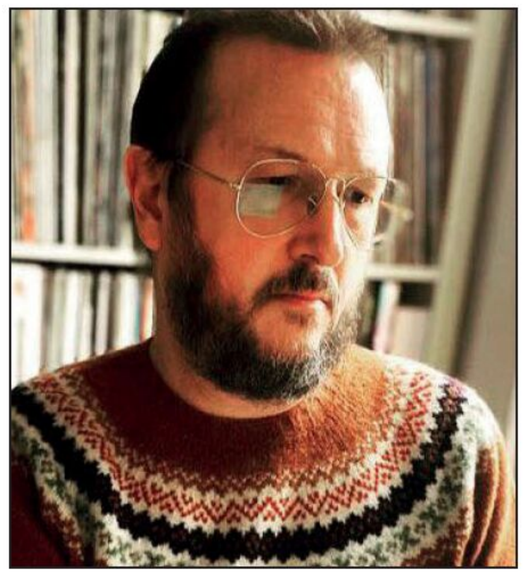

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The Cambridge Audio MXN10 streamer and a year Qobuz sub

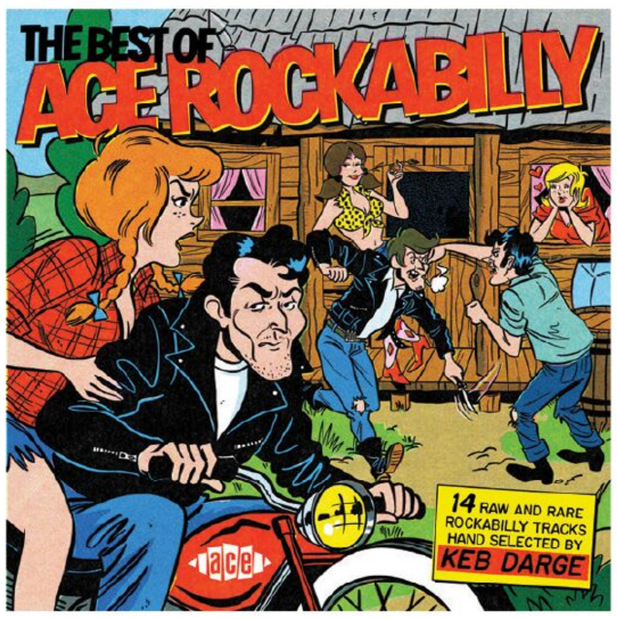
We only have *three* copies left of our Godley & Creme limited edition LP. Head to silverbackpublishing.rocks/product/godley-cremes-lost-60s-recordings-exclusive-vinyl-offer/ to buy. First come, first served.

New releases: December 2023

Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present Incident At A Free Festival

CDCHD 1619
XXQLP2 120 2LP

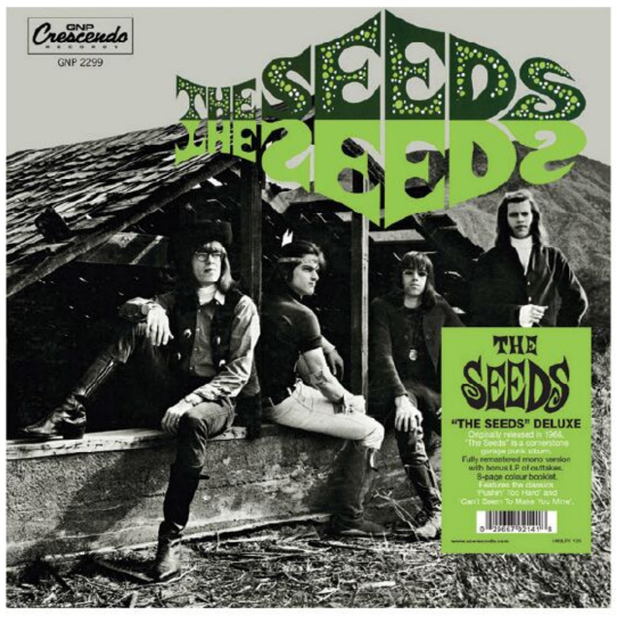
You're at a festival in Berkshire in 1972. It's three in the afternoon. The headliner is still hours away. Your flares have four inches of rising damp from the wet grass. But Stray, Stackwaddy and Andwella are keeping you on your feet. When you look back years later, you will realise these were the bands you enjoyed the most. As well as the beer…



The Best of Ace Rockabilly Hand Selected by Keb Darge

CHD 1637 LP

Legendary international DJ, Keb Darge, fell under the spell of this music when his Japanese girlfriend forced him to go down to a 'Rockabilly' night back in 1989. As soon as the DJ dropped the needle on Johnny Burnette's 'Rockabilly Boogie' Keb was mesmerized. Although it has taken an age to persuade him, Keb has now applied his perfectionist compiling skills to pick 14 killers to grace this fantastic collection.



The Seeds The Seeds

HIQLP2 129 2LP

Originally released in 1966, "The Seeds" is an essential garage punk album. We're proud to make this deluxe edition of "The Seeds" available again which features the original album in mono, a bonus LP of outtakes and booklet packed with sensational photos and memorabilia. (Also available as CDWIKD 308)

Dee Ervin / You Make Me Happy C/W Give Me One More Day

CITY 089 7"

'You Make Me Happy' is a terrific up-tempo dance track that was recently featured on "Masterpieces Of Modern Soul; Vol 6". Both sides are a match for anything he created in a successful career throughout the 60s & 70s.

The Mayberry Movement / I Can See Him Loving You C/W What Did I Do Wrong

CITY 090 7"

This pairing was slated to be Event 218 in late 1974, but as no copies have emerged, it can be assumed that the single was pulled. Their loss; our gain.

Tommy Youngblood / The Other Brothers / Tobacco Road North C/W Nobody But Me

REPRO 12 7"

"The Soul Of Tommy Youngblood" 1970 Kent LP had many fine tracks, especially 'Tobacco Road North, which gets a deserved release here. The flip is another UK Kent exclusive that sold out on its first Kent Select press and is still much sought-after.

John Lee Hooker Boogie Chillen' C/W Boogie Chillen' # 2

SEN 41 7"

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the release of John Lee Hooker's 'Boogie Chillen'. We now present 'Boogie Chillen'' and 'Boogie Chillen' #2' as a limited edition 7" single that plays at 45rpm. There are classics. There are stone cold classics. And there is 'Boogie Chillen''.

www.acerecords.com

thoughts&words

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MISSON IMPOSSIBLE

Hi Jon,

Having developed an interest in the mod scene as a 13-year-old in summer 1978, I do agree with Paul Moody's comments that it was even better in '85 than in the revival period due to the participants looking back to the original scene and basing our look on bespoke tailoring and French haircuts etc – much more purist. Nineteen-eighty-two was the last good "mod" year on the Nationals and, with the demise of The Jam, those of us that were left were kept very fit being regularly chased by skinheads, scooterists and, eventually, casuals. We attended TAMSCA events in '83 and Phoenix Society events from '84, being somewhat underground and under the media radar at this point. However, what I don't agree with is the comment that the scene was all over by '86.

Late '85/86/87 saw the huge all-nighters at The Wirrina in Peterborough as well as the CCI Mod Rallies that regularly attracted circa 1,000 bespoke modernists to coastal locations from Easter to late summer (along with the Pinstripes all-nighters). There were new modzines aplenty and a very healthy circuit of "live" bands and club nights, and '87 saw the summer that Latin soul really took hold and The James Taylor Quartet were formed (the Gorleston Rally was just their second gig) and they brought us the 'Blow Up' single and *Mission Impossible* mini-album.

There was a split on the scene around '88/89 though, when the so called "pirate rallies" started to take hold, with Untouchables and Underground events splitting the numbers attending each (a reaction to Tony Class and the CCI dominance, I recall). And, of course, the contemporary music scene had an impact too with many southern mods getting into house music whereas a large number of mods in the Midlands and North started following some of the Madchester bands (Stone Roses, Inspiral Carpets, Charlatans etc.) which was a path that led us to Brit Pop in '94 (and the Brighton Beach and Hideaway Clubs that followed later in the decade).

Keep up the good work with our favourite monthly magazine – I've just renewed my subscription for another 12 months.

Thanks.

Paul Hooper-Keeley

I knew this article would lead to comment. Remember, it's written from the viewpoint of the London purists, who in true mod style were always one step ahead. Bizarrely, the 1984 peiod is now more historical than those mods' obsessions with 20 years before, which is mad.

THIS IS THE FUTURE

Hi Jon,

Just wanted to send a very belated thanks for a package I received in the mail a couple of months ago. It was shortly after I'd renewed my *Shindig!* subscription, and while I've become accustomed over the years to get a CD as a bonus each time I do so, it was quite a nice surprise to get a whole stack of discs this time. I assumed it had something to do with the hassle I had with getting my magazines last year (for which you guys were not at all to blame) and if so, nice of you to remember, and a very nice gesture. Thanks again!

As a funny aside, my 14-year-old daughter is always very interested when I get packages of music and was very fascinated with this one. When I reacted to The Dials' *That Was The Future* with "Ah, one of my Top Five albums from the last 10 years!" (and one that I didn't have in physical format), she became curious and suggested we'd have it in the car for our road trips. It turned out to be love at first listen for her, and she's now a fan, quite possibly The Dials' only Swedish teenage girl fan.

Since we had our correspondence last year, I haven't had to pay any more fees. There still is a little customs procedure for each issue, which delays it for about a week, but it's something I can live with.

Thanks,

Jon Naurin

Great to hear Joe. We have to educate the young to guarantee enlightened minds. Thanks for sticking with us.

GRAVEDIGGER

Hi Jon,

I am a long-time printed issue reader and collector and I greatly enjoy my copy of *Shindig!* each and every month.

I have almost everything you have ever issued, except... *Gravedigger* #1! Since early 2011 I have been putting together my collection of *Shindig!* magazines and books, either by purchases from the Red Eye Record Store in Sydney (Australia), directly through my subscription or by picking up earlier issues from around the world as they appeared on the internet from time to time. I have everything from *Son Of Gravedigger* (#2, spring 1996) to now (just renewed my subscription too).

I live in hope that *Gravedigger* #1 will turn up one day but have almost given up hope of that happening. I was wondering, is there any chance a photocopy of the old fanzine is available/can be created that I may purchase so that I can complete my set?

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Regards,

Tony Bell

Next year marks our 30th, so watch this space Tony.

NEW LANDS

Hi Jon,

Unless I'm mistaken, and god knows I seem to have lost my photographic memory at the developers these days (one for the kids there!),I don't remember seeing a feature on Flying Saucer Attack in your hallowed pages?

In my humble opinion, this should be rectified forthwith.

Although said band shared their name with a Rezillos song, bubblegum-punk they most certainly weren't (aren't?). Not unless The Rezillos were to return fusing white noise blitzkriegs with heavy-lidded dreaminess that is.

In fact, I cannot think of any other band that melds strains

STAR LETTER

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

Hi Jon,

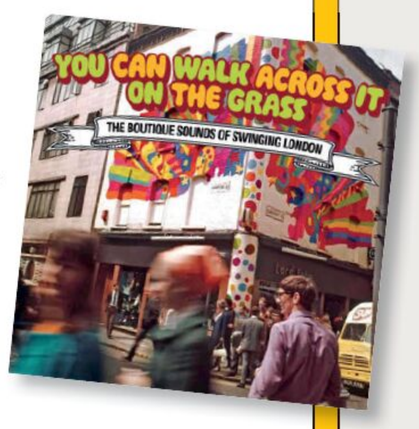
What a great interview in Issue #145 with Bob Stanley; he really loves music and records from every era doesn't he?

Like Bob, I was someone who lived in Croydon and loved spending time in Beano's. On many a Saturday my wife would go off shopping and leave me and our two youngish children there as if it was some kind of creche. They loved it because they could go upstairs and play pinball and watch videos in the mini cinema while I leafed through the racks of CDs and vinyl. In those days, without a great deal of disposable income however, it would just be the odd item that I could justify purchasing. I still have one of Beano's record bags that lives in my music room and reminds me of those days though.

I always had the idea in the back of my mind that if and when I managed to get early retirement I would try and volunteer in the shop, and therefore spend even more time surrounded by all that music memorabilia. However, as we know, Beano's succumbed to collectors moving to eBay and the like and closed down. If I'd known how much people would be paying for second-hand vinyl in the future, I would have bought a lot more of the items that were being sold off at 50% of the advertised price! All I have is some *(rather blurry)* photos I took inside the shop in its final days.

Yours,

Colin Cunningham



Thanks Colin. There's been a brilliant response to the record shop thread on our Facebook page. It's lovely to read this one too. Beano's touched many. A copy of Grapefruit's You Can Walk Across It On The Grass: The Boutique Sounds Of Swinging London *3-CD set is on its way to you*

Bri's complete collection of *Shindig!* ephemera. You should do the same.

of acid-folk, space-rock and *Psychocandy* so succesfully with ambient and Kosmische music. "Rural psychedelia" was their own hugely fitting description of the sound. They even wove in very faint elements of drum 'n' bass on their latter albums, although I guess that just came with the Bristol territory.

To my ears, they laid down DIY grooves that should appeal to fans of bands as disparate as Popol Vuh, Trees, Brian Eno and My Bloody Valentine.

The quality of their covers is worth the price of admission alone: anyone requiring a swift antidote to the bounciness of Britpop should immediately seek out their cover of Suede's 'The Drowners' for a rapid, jarring cleansing. I'll stand by their epic seven-minute cover of 'Sally free And Easy' as being one of its best interpretations. Moreover, their cover of 'Coming Home' by The Prisoners demonstrates both unimprovably impeccable taste, and their ability to radically distort a tune whilst just about staying within the confines of the original song structure.... formulaic by numbers mod re-hash this ain't! This ability to re-interpret sublime source material was further demonstrated on their cover of Wire's 'Outdoor Miner'. I'm surprised that no one has returned the favour by covering one of the myriad original delights across their five or so masterpiece albums.

Thanks,

Martin Farrow

Mr Farrow, you are indeed correct. Reviewed, mentioned in passing, but never properly featured. One for the "to do" pile.

THE DELTA SWEETIE

Hi Jon,

I seem to recall you did an article on Bobbie Gentry a few months ago.

As I type this, I'm watching what's left of her TV shows from 1968 to '71 on BBC Four. The early shows are a bit repetitive as a lot of the songs sound the same, but what gets me is how she comes across as a female Elvis. The later shows are a bit more mainstream and full of other peoples' songs.

All good stuff and worthy of a binge watch... these shows won't be deleted from my set top box in a hurry.

Regards,

Andrew Redding

We sure did, all the way back in issue #83. It's available to buy at shindig-magazine.com too. The shows will remain on BBC iPlayer for some time, so we would urge readers to catch them while they can.

EARTH, WIND, SUN & RAIN

Hi Jon,

Thanks for doing such a brilliant job on the Dave Evans feature – easily the best, most in-depth and informative thing ever written about him in the past 50+ years. Brilliant job!

Best,

Ian A Anderson

Wow. Thanks Ian. And thanks for taking part.

A GUIDING LIGHT

Hey Jon,

A photo of my *Shindig!* collection.

Cheers,

Brian Davies

All readers should take note and stock up on their back issues via shindig-magazine.com

ASTRAL PLANE

Hi Jon,

I've just subscribed for another year, and am loving what seems like a wider range of styles covered over the last year. Or am I imagining that?

The Say She She LP being a case in point – not what I would have expected but I've bought that and it's one of my favourite releases of the year.

I like to read my books and mags on paper and listen to my music on vinyl. You can't beat holding it in your hand eh!

I do a monthly online show called *Polyvinyl Craftsmen*, playing all sorts of stuff old and new. Check it out if you get a spare moment, we've just passed 500 shows. I'm sure the readers will enjoy it.

Keep on doing what you're doing,

Paul Cooper

Thanks for the heads-up Paul. We aim to turn our readers onto new things.

LET THERE BE DRUMS

Hi Jon,

I must disagree with Mike Fornatale's review of Gypsy's *In The Garden* when he says the only thing that keeps it from a five-star rating is the drum solo. The drum solo is what builds the main track into part two. That drummer also happens to be Bill Lordan, who went on to play with Robin Trower.

Also Gypsy's debut album came out in 1970 on CBS and was called American Gypsy so as not to get them mixed up with the English Gypsy

Your magazine is the best since *ZIGZAG.*

Would be nice to see some features on Gypsy, Terry Reid, and Dawes

All the best,

Paul Toms

Paul, we have done an epic piece on the Brit Gypsy in issue #120, which you can buy at shindig-magazine.com. We intend to cover the US variant soon. And good call on Reid, yet to do him. Same with Dawes.

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

SHINDIG!

Editor-in-Chief:
Jon 'Mojo' Mills
jon@shindig-magazine.com
64 North View Road, London N8 7LL

Reviews Editor:
Andy Morten
andy@shindig-magazine.com

Live Reviews Editor:
Kate Hodges
kate@shindig-magazine.com

Contributing Editor:
Thomas Patterson
thomas@shindig-magazine.com

Assistant Editor:
Paul Osborne
paul@shindig-magazine.com

Editorial Assistance:
Phil Suggitt
phil@shindig-magazine.com
Fiona McQuarrie
Martin Ruddock

Contributors:
Camilla Aisa, Grahame Bent, Michael Björn, Millen Brown-Ewens, Christopher Budd, Tess Carges, Seán Casey, Hugh Dellar, Stuart Draper, Duncan Fletcher, Mike Fornatale, Peter Gallagher, Ben Graham, Sarah Gregory, Chris Groom, Lenny Helsing, Henry Hutton, Johnnie Johnstone, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Morten, Simon Norfolk, Chaim O'Brien Blumenthal, Thomas Patterson, Jeff Penczak, Dom Picksley, Paul Ritchie, Marco Rossi, Martin Ruddock, Vic Templar, Chris Twomey, Andrew Ure, Clive Webb, Stephen Wood

Publisher:
Tom Saunders, Silverback Publishing
tom@silverbackpublishing.rocks
14 Victoria Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4RT
Tel: 07841 412199

Director: Andy Crispin

Commercial Manager:
Alan Thomas
alan@shindig-magazine.com
Tel: 07830 168076

Subscriptions:
subs@silverbackpublishing.rocks
Tel: 07841 412199

Design: Martin Cook, Andy Morten
Printed by: Warners Group

SILVERBACK PUBLISHING

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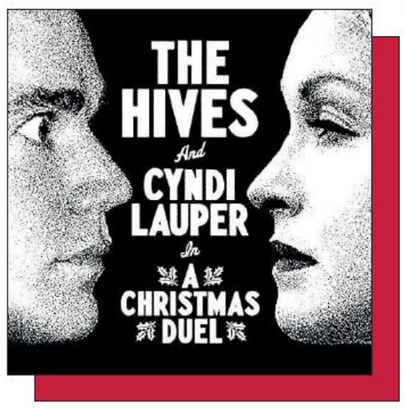
shindiggin'

What's HOT on the Shindig! turntable

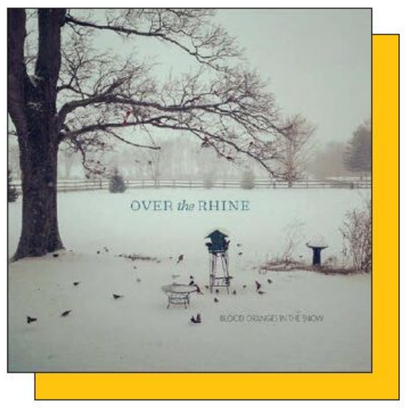
The brand new releases, compilation standouts, old album tracks and dusty 45s rockin' our world this month



THE HIVES & CYNDI LAUPER
A Christmas Duel

Fed up hearing Shane and Kirsty eternally squabbling as you wander Asda's aisles? For an alternative dysfunctional Christmas song, check out this 2009 collaboration which replaces the downward-spiralling tragedy of 'Fairytale Of New York' with black comedy that spirals ever outrageously upwards, Pelle Almqvist going from buying no Christmas presents to sleeping with Cyndi's sister in the opening couplet alone. The intention was to give the doo-wop arrangement the Wall Of Sound treatment, but in truth it lands closer to Wizzard's 'I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday' pastiche, and that's absolutely fine by us.

Available on: DISQUES HIVES 45



OVER THE RHINE
Another Christmas

Linford Detweiler and Karin Bergquist, AKA Ohio-based Americana outfit Over The Rhine, must really love Christmas as they have released a festive album in each of the past three decades (the 2020s platter is hopefully due soon). 'Another Christmas' from 2014's *Blood Oranges In The Snow* is as beautiful as a bleak midwinter, with Karin's ethereal vocal almost Dickensian in its haunting of Linford's world-weary lead. Fancy having yourself a melancholy little Christmas? This is the song for you. And that moment it suddenly morphs into a sombre 'Hark The Herald Angels Sing'? Goosebumps, buddy. Goosebumps.

Available on: Blood Oranges In The Snow (GREAT SPECKLED DOG CD)

BOBBY SUTLIFF
12th Of February

Sutliff and Tim Lee were two of powerpop's strongest songwriters and their Windbreakers albums remain cherished artefacts of the genre today. Over the past six years he recorded what would be his final album before succumbing to cancer last year. It's chock full of the catchy pop melodies that were a Windbreakers trademark with chiming guitars echoing across dreamy Byrdsian melodies and heartfelt lyrics. This slow-burning tearjerker trades tasteful solos with a jangly 12-string backing and the heart-breaking lyric "There's a moment that I cling to / I have a photograph somewhere / I am standing next to you and your sister / It's the only way I can prove I was really there."

Available on: Bob Sings And Plays (CAREER CD)

DONOVAN
Wild Witch Lady

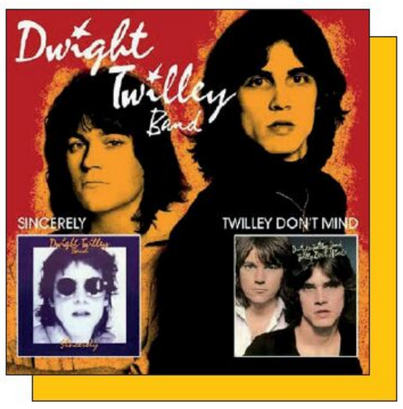
Well, for a man that *very nearly* invented psychedelia, and whose embrace of jazz was certainly light years ahead, the post-'Barabajagal' Donovan continued to move with the times. During the late '60s to mid-70s the seemingly cosmic troubadour always dropped a few "heavy" numbers on his albums, often adopting a fine falsetto worthy of a mic twiddling cock-rocker. 'Wild Witch Lacy' focuses on a sexy, Hammer-esque vixen in this louche swampy rocker offset by some fantastic strings. It's not one of his most poetic, but it rocks along mightily with a voodoo groove worthy of the best, and boasts a killer production.

Available on: Cosmic Wheels (EPIC LP)

BIS
Kandy Pop

This Glasgow-based combo burst upon the indie scene in the mid-90s with this John Peel session version of the then still to be released 'Kandy Pop'. Full of vitality with its great injection of thrills, energy and a keen sense of almost moronically cool pop nous, the song remains a righteous blast of primitive electro-pop punk. The vocal interjections between Manda Rin and Sci-Fi Steven also bring to mind those other Scottish funsters from decades earlier, The Rezillos.

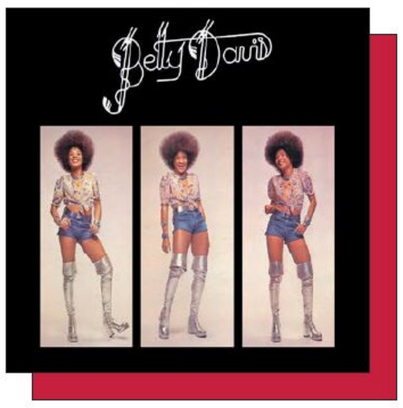
Available on: John Peel Sessions 14.10.95 (PRECIOUS RECORDINGS OF LONDON LP)



DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND
You Were So Warm

Shindig! could hardly not mark the October passing of Dwight Twilley, and to do so we're going back to the heady days when he and the late Phil Seymour formed the core of The Dwight Twilley Band, essentially The Lemon Twigs a half century early. Culled from their debut platter *Sincerely*, the shimmering 'You Were So Warm' is a song Big Star and Badfinger would have been proud to call their own. How come this wasn't huge in 1976 when Britain baked and America celebrated its Bicentennial? Probably because it wasn't released as a single, but in a perfect world...

Available on: Sincerely / Twilley Don't Mind (RAVEN 2-CD)



BETTY DAVIS
If I'm In Luck I Might Get Picked Up

As the opening cut on her self-titled 1973 debut album this sassy, hip-grinding funk jam was the record buying public's introduction to the outrageously foxy Betty Davis. Backed by a heavyweight congregation of current and former members of Sly & The Family Stone and Santana, this brazen motherlode of uncut street-funk bumps, grinds and shimmies its way all over the sidewalk driven by a wickedly superfly drum and guitar groove, swells of jaywalking Hammond and Betty's nasty gal come-ons. There's plain risqué and then there's Betty Davis. *This* is completely outta sight on every level.

Available on: Betty Davis (LIGHT IN THE ATTIC LP)

JASON FALKNER
Holiday

Quite which variety of holiday is being espoused here is unclear, but powerpop magus Falkner is clearly in celebratory mode as he throws his all into these dizzying four minutes. The self-doubting lyric ("I think I think too much, you see / I'd love the ability to simply let things go") is curiously at odds with the shape-shifting melodies and soaring key change. First released as a standalone single on Virginia indie Lovitt in 1998, the song was then added to the last-minute rejig of Falkner's second and final Elektra album *Can You Still Feel?* the following year. It's been 14 years since Jason gifted us a new album. Here's hoping that 2024 will remedy that.

Available on: LOVITT 45

JOEL PATERSON
Christmas Island

Chicago guitar and steel guitar wizard Joel Paterson gives us some sunny southern hemisphere vibes on his instrumental version of The Andrews Sisters' Christmas hit. Having been turned on to Paterson's intricate virtuoso playing by his 2019 Beatles covers album *Let It Be Guitar*, the prospect of a Christmas themed album was too tempting to resist. It just had to go on this year's seasonal wants list. Kitsch? Twee? Yes, and yes. But it's different to what you'll hear ad-nauseum down the shopping centres, and it's a whole lotta fun. We could all do with more of that!

Available on: The More The Merrier (VENTRELLA/HI-TIDE LP)

THE DUDLEY MOORE TRIO
Song For Suzy

A deep dive into the work of bass player Pete Morgan (of The Roy Budd Trio and others) brings us this exuberant, scat-tastic jazz-funk outing. Recorded on tour in Australia, and released there on an EP, 'Song For Suzy' (presumably written for Moore's first wife Suzy Kendall) found its way onto 1972's *Today* LP in the UK alongside seven other Australian-recorded cuts including the brilliant 'The Staircase', which should be a modern- jazz piano standard. May this all-too-brief tune lodge in your winter months.

Available on: ATLANTIC 45

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it's a happening thing

Getting inspiration from the cosmos, as always.
Gruff Rhys, 2023

Loony Leftie Music

Our favourite Welsh renaissance man **GRUFF RHYS** returns with perhaps his finest album to date.
CAMILLA AISA hears about the power and value of music and people, and being "the token older artist"

Maybe surprisingly for a record called *Sadness Sets Me Free*, there's a warm, welcoming feeling to Gruff Rhys' latest offering. Making music in Algeria with Tuareg rock group Imarhan (he appeared on 2022's *Aboogi*), the Welsh musician enjoyed recording in the moment and, in particular, French engineer Maxime Kosinetz's ability to capture spontaneous happenings. A few months later, as a new tour was ending in France, Rhys reunited with Kosinetz at La Frette, a 19th century mansion turned recording studio. He had some new songs he had been playing live and developed some others with his band during sound-checks. "We were able to record something extremely immediate in a really comfortable setting. It was like recording in a very large living room," he explains. "And it was because we were in France, I suppose, that they were breaking for regular meals and things like that – I'm sure it's got a lot to do with it, everyone was in a good mood, happy to play and play. People's sugar levels were really great!"

After all, music's ability to create communal joy is something the Super Furry Animals frontman has always been interested in. "Music and people are very powerful when they're combined, and that can create a lot of joyful moments." Still, his new album doesn't shy away from investigating the other side of the complex coin called human life. In fact, it faces sorrow and embraces it. "I can't bring myself down too much by just wallowing in sadness," Rhys says. "But with this record, I thought, I'd like to take the opportunity to feel comfortable in it. To find the freedom to write sad songs, songs of political frustration, songs of melancholy, and songs of the absurd nature of life."

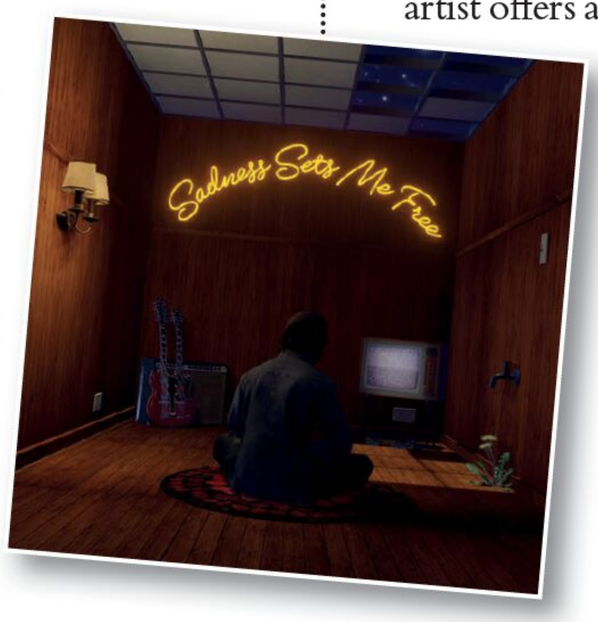
Introspective but instinctively broad-minded, *Sadness Sets Me Free* gains a degree of inspiration from change. "It's hard to disengage, I think – things are so serious," he reflects. "In a way, music itself is under threat. The spaces where music has been created in my lifetime – the discos, the venues, the rehearsal spaces and the recording studios – are all under threat by badly conceived developments. It happens in Cardiff, where I live, but I'm sure it is similar everywhere globally. They're closing down cultural and communal spaces to try and sell real estate. It is kind of destroying the foundations of music. At the same time, the recording world is being attacked by extreme commerce as well. It's becoming harder and harder for a concept of something like a record label to exist, because music doesn't hold the value it once did. So there is that, on top of wars and injustice. I'd imagine that this is a good time to remain engaged. Music has escapist powers, but it's also something deeply communal and of value to society."

"There are often contradictory song titles in the world of country. I had this idea of making a French-sounding country record"

It may come as a surprise that the album's most politically conscious moments are also its most musically soothing; biting lyrics form an unexpected alliance with mellow sonics. Take the rebellious call of 'Cover Up The Cover Up', for instance: "I thought it would be fun to have revolutionary thoughts portrayed as a romantic ballad," Rhys explains. "It's about reinvention, rather than violent uprising. Rebellion has the potential to be beautiful and peaceful." In a way, the pairing of the melodic and the engaged has taken cue from old radio favourites. "When I was younger," he remembers, "I used to listen to John Peel, and he'd play the bigger independent young artists of the day, and a lot of contemporary post-punk. But he also had an occasional slot that I think he called the Loony Leftie Corner, where he'd play left-wing music by older artists, things like 'Lives In The Balance' by Jackson Browne, maybe some Robert Wyatt tracks, things like that. Somewhere in the back of my mind I'm thinking of these new songs as something that could fit in with a Loony Leftie John Peel set as a kind of token older artist who's trying to engage politically and making weird pop records," he smiles.

Weird pop can eagerly take many directions, and so does *Sadness Sets Me Free*. The title track, for instance, starts things off with *bona fide* country inflection. "I'd written most of the songs before recording," Rhys points out. "We'd toured quite a lot, and I'd been hanging out with Kliph Scurlock, who's from the Midwest in America. We were listening to a lot of country music: Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Bobbie Gentry… I think that influenced the lyrics and the title. There are often contradictory song titles in the world of country. I had this idea of making a French-sounding country record, I loved how Maxim [Kosinetz] was able to record my vocals – really simply, making it really prominent without me having to particularly sing. I don't know if it's because of French engineers being more used to people whispering or something," he teases.

If you have seen Gruff Rhys live, you know about the cardboard signs. When he wrote the brilliant and one-of-a-kind memoir *Resist Phony Encores!* in 2020, it was through the cue cards he'd been using at gigs that he reflected on his life and career, as well as what society has been going through since he started performing. So, before our meeting comes to an end, I ask him to summarise 2023 by an imaginary cardboard sign. "I have to react instinctively," he considers, "whereas when I'm making signs, I can take a lot of time thinking about them. But yes, I do need to make some new ones. For 2023, I'd go with 'We need peace'. Yes, I'd have to make a sign for peace and compassion." And what about the year that's about to begin? Can a cue card guide us through it? 'A time for change' is what the artist offers after some thinking. "These are quite predictable sentiments," he concedes, "but it is such a terrible time. There seems to be so much lack of compassion. It gets harder and harder to find humour in it."



Sadness Sets Me Free is out on 26th January on Rough Trade

Queen Of The Gems

Thirty-five years into her musical career, **EMMA ANDERSON**'s solo debut *Pearlies* finds the former Lush/Sing-Sing lynchpin exploring baroque-pop, spectral dreamscapes and '60s girl-group noir.

Here, she guides **ANDY MORTEN** through 10 tunes that fed into the album's creation

VASHTI BUNYAN

I'd Like To Walk Around In Your Mind

(From *Some Things Just Stick In Your Mind* (Singles And Demos 1964 To 1967), Spinney, 2007, recorded 1967)

Lush covered this song for one of the many B-sides we were required to do back in 1995/96 as part of the whole marketing ploy around formats to enable us to get into the Top 40! The thing is, at the time, we didn't actually know the song was by Vashti; Phil (King, bassist) had somehow got hold of a white label 12-inch lacking any info whatsoever and suggested we cover it. It's a lovely brief little song and it has the most amazing key change in it which still sends me off guard even though I've heard it many times. Vashti went to Queen's College which was the school in Harley Steet, central London where I met Miki Berenyi (of Lush). She's a very interesting person that obviously "dropped out" of mainstream society, if for just a while. She's also a fantastic and unique songwriter.

DAVID AXELROD

The Dr & The Diamond

(From *David Axelrod*, Mo Wax, 2001)

During most of the '90s I lived in Colville Houses, a cul-de-sac in Notting Hill, and my flatmate Grace was going out with the deejay Sean Rowley, who became famous for the 'All Back To Mine' series of events and CDs (he also stars on the cover of Oasis' *(What's The Story) Morning Glory?* album). Sean used to spend much of his time round ours and he became a fantastic source of musical knowledge for me. David Axelrod was one artist I learned about from him. Axelrod's music is mostly instrumental and fuses jazz, soul and rock with choral additions. It sometimes has an almost religious quality to it. Many hip-hop and trip-hop artists owe much to his style and vision and this track from his 2001 comeback album on Mo Wax became a firm favourite.

THE FLIRTATIONS

Nothing But A Heartache

(A-side, Deram, 1968)

This was another track from my Rowley education. I'm not an aficionado of '60s northern soul by any stretch of the imagination, but there are tracks I've loved for years, like 'Band Of Gold' by Freda Payne. This was one I immediately fell in love with and have never tired of, even though I've heard it countless times. It's just punchy, rousing and has great lyrics. I didn't know much about The Flirtations then and I don't now, although I believe they're still going. I don't think you always need to know all the info and history behind a group to enjoy the music. This is one that will always get me onto the dancefloor, no matter what.

SHOCKING BLUE

Send Me A Postcard

(A-side, Pink Elephant, 1968)

I first heard this on a compilation Ladytron put out in 2003 called *Softcore Jukebox*. (I'm a huge Ladytron fan; I worked for their management at this time and Danny from the band co-produced Lush's *Blind Spot* EP in 2016). I had heard of Shocking Blue of course because of their big hit 'Venus' but this track was new to me and it's brilliant: raw, sexy and direct and so resonant of the late '60s/early '70s sound. Lead singer Mariska Veres was also extremely striking with her kohl eyes and massive hair which I subsequently learned was a wig, but who cares? In fact, I might model myself on her for my next photo session.

CHRIS BELL

I Am The Cosmos

(A-side, Car, 1978)

The first time I heard this song in any shape or form was on the This Mortal Coil album *Blood*, which came out in 1991. It led me to the original, by Chris Bell of Big Star. Unlike This Mortal Coil's more restrained affair, Bell's version is messy, glorious and emotional and graced with his almost strained but wonderful voice. The main guitar on this track is a fine example of one put through a Leslie speaker. When were we making my album, I said to James (Chapman, producer) about a certain guitar track, "Can we try and put a Leslie on this?", though of course meaning a software simulated one and not a real one. He hadn't used one before and I explained to him that a real one was in an actual cabinet and, sure enough, when he got the Logic equivalent up on screen it was a picture of a wooden cupboard! He had had no idea!

THE BYRDS

(I'll) Feel A Whole Lot Better

(B-side, Columbia, 1965)

I wanted to include this as it was one of the first songs I taught myself to play on the guitar. I went out with Kevin Shields of My Bloody Valentine in the '80s. He owned the *Mr Tambourine Man* album and I used to play this track over again in order to learn the guitar part. I had learned basic chords on a free guitar course at the college where I did my A-levels so was able to do it without too much bother, but I've always had a soft spot for this song; the lyrics often having had a lot of resonance at certain times in my life. I also went onto love Gene Clark's solo work, again discovering much of it via the This Mortal Coil albums (Ivo does have impeccable taste) with 'With Tomorrow' and 'No Other' being two of my favourites. Clark was so talented and had such a great ear for melody.

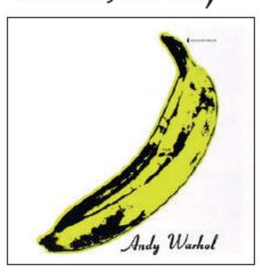
"The VU had simple but genius melodies that were easy to work out and learn on the guitar – and the tambourine... such a familiar instrument from the '80s indie scene"

Emma Anderson. Sofa, so good
PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND & NICO

I'll Be Your Mirror

(From *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, Verve, 1966)



I had to include a Velvet Underground track and this was always one of my favourites. I mean, what is there to say about The Velvet Underground that hasn't already been said? Again, a band I got into in the '80s retrospectively, mainly from being into that C86/anorak scene. The VU had simple but genius melodies that were easy to work out and learn on the guitar – and the tambourine… such a familiar instrument from the '80s indie scene. I was also very taken with the whole Warhol/Factory/New York scene that was the backdrop to their existence. It seemed so exotic and cool to my late teenage self, living in West London. And of course, Nico was like some almost unreal ultra-ice goddess.

RICHARD DAVIES

Sign Up Maybe For Being

(From *There's Never Been A Crowd Like This*, Flydaddy, 1996)

Richard Davies was one half of Australian band Cardinal, the other half of which was Eric Matthews. I remember having some

contact with Eric some years ago (he was a bit of a Lush fan, if I'm not mistaken) but I never met Richard. I somehow got hold of this album on a promo disc when it came out in 1996 and immediately fell in love with this track. It's just a really hooky, strummy little song with gorgeous harmonies and some clever brass and strings. And it finishes on a beautiful chord. I love it when songs resolve on a chord that was never in the rest of the song.

PETULA CLARK

Don't Sleep In The Subway

(A-side, Pye, 1967)

Petula Clark was one of those artists I was first introduced to as a child in the '70s on the many light entertainment shows on the telly, without knowing she had had a stellar recording career in the '60s (see also Sacha Distel, Cilla Black, Adam Faith). She was so beautiful and elegant, and I love this track as it has so many elements in it – different sections, time signature changes and styles (the chorus is also very Beach Boys in feel) and of course it was written and produced by Tony Hatch, whom I was first aware of from his regular appearances on talent show *New Faces* where he and Mickey Most never minced their words when evaluating the aspiring acts. As a child, I thought he was some grumpy guy but obviously was a pretty talented composer, producer and arranger.

CHRIS HARWOOD

When I Come Home

(From *Nice To Meet Miss Christine*, Finders Keepers, 2006, recorded 1973)

Christine or Chris Harwood, an English vocalist, is an artist that I discovered by going down rabbit holes on the internet. I'd been looking into Andy Votel's Finders Keepers record label and this album that he'd reissued. It's one of those records that did nothing when it came out at the time (1970). It has some stellar personnel on it – Peter Banks from Yes and Pete York from The Spencer Davis Group – and listening to it takes me back to living in central London in the '70s, pre-punk, when this sort of music – a fusion of jazz, prog, folk and R&B – was on the radio and being played in the homes of people I visited. Probably by their older brothers.

Pearlies is out now on Sonic Cathedral

The two sides of Project Gemini. L-R: Bert Page, Tony Coote and Jack Sharp rehearsing; Paul Osborne, creating

All The Colours Of Darkness

PROJECT GEMINI has developed from a home recording project to a formidable live band.

ANDY MORTEN pokes his nose into the making of "the difficult second album"

"Musically, I think I'm growing in confidence and so it's a big step forward," begins Paul Osborne, the man behind Project Gemini and occasional *Shindig!* contributor. "I was conscious of not wanting to repeat myself whilst trying to maintain the core elements of what I loved about the first album (2022's *The Children Of Scorpio*). There's a much wider range of influences and it's more a collection of individual tunes than the thematic/soundtrack vibe that runs through the first record."

Encouraged by the response to the first album, Paul, whose primary instrument is the bass, found himself assembling a band for occasional live shows. Enter Jack Sharp (Wolf People, Large Plants), Tony Coote (PP Arnold, Little Barrie, Steve Cradock) and Bert Page (Cromagnon Band). "The basic tracks for this album were already 50-60% done before the Project Gemini live band came into existence, but it's been such a joyous experience to play and hang out with incredible musicians like Jack, Tony and Bert that I wanted to make sure they were featured. So, Jack added guitar to a few tracks and Tony and Bert added drum and Moog parts to a couple more. I'm already well into another couple of projects that Tony's completed drum tracks for and hope to make at least one of them about the live band as it'd be amazing to capture that magic on record."

The Children Of Scorpio instantly rose above the glut of pseudo-soundtrack albums we've heard in the last couple of years, largely due to its organic sound palette, Osborne's natural musicianship and the contributions of guitarist Barrie Cadogan, drummer Shuzin and Paul Isherwood of The Soundcarriers' painstaking mixing skills. "I've also collaborated with more people on this one," Paul continues, "which has expanded the sound a lot. Alongside Barrie, Markey Funk (Group Modular) and Kid Victrola (Gloria), who were all on the first record, Wendy Martinez of Gloria has written some beautiful French language vocals, Dorian of The Soundcarriers plays flute on a few tunes, and Paul Elliott from Eleven 76 plays percussion. Most of the drum parts were completed before I started working with Tony and were played by Raz Man, the drummer in global psych-funkers Sababa 5. My youngest daughter even provided the keyboard intro to the final track!"

"For some, sundown/night-time brings the chance for hedonism and escape – for others it's filled with paranoia and fear"

The Euro soundtracks, acid-folk, French pop and Anatolian grooves that informed *Children* are still present and correct, while conceptually "it's loosely based around idea of how the hours between sundown and sunrise can affect human behaviour. For some, sundown/night-time brings the chance for hedonism and escape – for others it's filled with paranoia and fear. Likewise, sunrise and the dawn of a new day is a positive/regenerative thing for some and for others, who are struggling each day with life, relationships, work etc, it can bring dread for what the day holds in store. Like many people I pinball between all those emotions."

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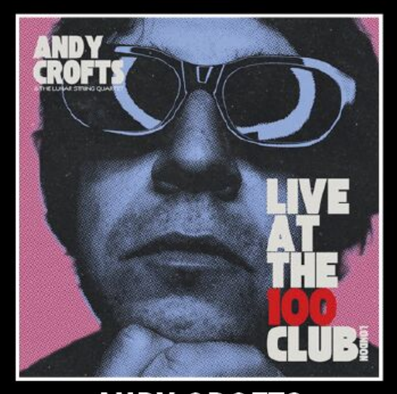

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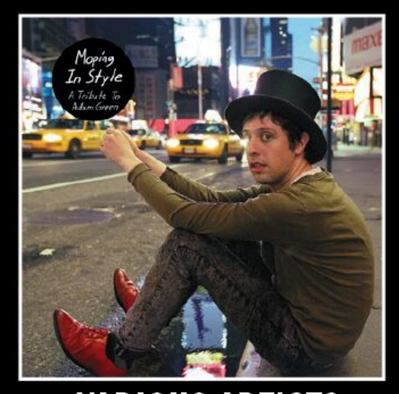

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THE STILL BROTHERS EP

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DJ YODA

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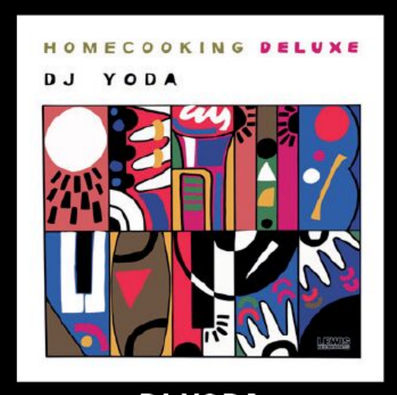
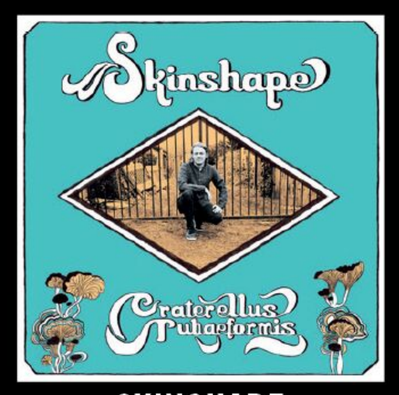


DJ YODA

HOME COOKING (DELUXE)

LEWIS RECORDINGS LP / CD

Remastered version with bonus 7" featuring remixes from Double Dee & Steinski and The Still Brothers. Guests include Nubya Garcia, Eva Lazarus and Theon Cross.



SKINSHAPE

CRATERELLUS TUBAEFORMIS

LEWIS RECORDINGS LP / CD

Skinshape's eighth album is a sublime mix of psyche, folk, jazz, soul and rock featuring the singles 'Amnesia', 'It's Real' and 'The Ocean'.

JONATHAN RADO

FOR WHO THE BELL TOLLS FOR

WESTERN VINYL LP

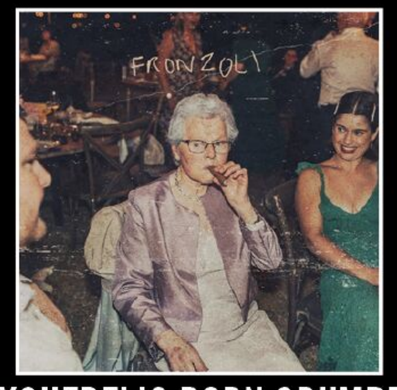
The first solo release in over a decade from Foxygen's Jonathan Rado, features appearances by The Lemon Twigs, Oberhofer, & Pure Bathing Culture, as they celebrate the impact Richard Swift had on Rado's life & work.

TRAMPOLENE

SWANSEA TO HORNSEY (ANNIVERSARY EDITION)

STRAP ORIGINALS LP / CD

"Intersperses poetry with rock in a way few artists dare to do today…their reference points are as versatile as any release this year - Patti Smith, Oasis, Dylan Thomas, Peter Doherty…Jones bleeds on these songs."



PSYCHEDELIC PORN CRUMPETS

FRONZOLI

WHAT REALITY? RECORDS LP / CD

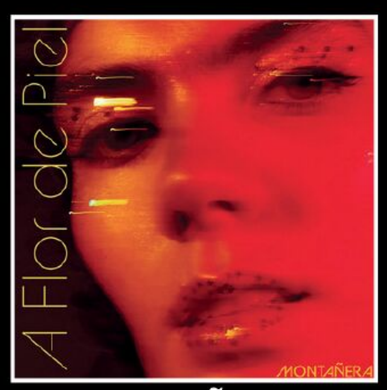
On their 6th album, Psychedelic Porn Crumpets have not only ventured into new territory, but proven there's nothing they can't do expertly." Rolling Stone. A prime example of PPC' mind-bending blend of heavy melodic guitars & harmonic lyrics & eccentric songwriting oeuvre.

ORBITING HUMAN CIRCUS

QUARTET PLUS TWO

MERGE RECORDS LP / CD

Julian Koster (Neutral Milk Hotel, The Music Tapes, creator of The Orbiting Human Circus podcast) helms this extraordinary album of originals + renditions of timeless compositions infused with Koster's signature warmth, musical brilliance, & of course, singing saw.

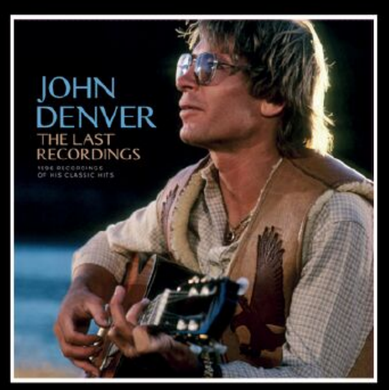


MONTAÑERA

A FLOR DE PIEL

WESTERN VINYL LP

Waves of vocals soar over artfully restrained electronics on this album of experimental ambient pop reminiscent of Fever Ray or Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith, or Juana Molina produced by Oneohtrix Point Never.



JOHN DENVER

THE LAST RECORDINGS

WINDSTAR RECORDS LP / CD

The last known studio recordings from John Denver, recorded in Nashville in 1997 shortly before his untimely death, is a collection of Denver's greatest hits reimagined as he wished to present them.

KISHI BASHI

MUSIC FROM THE SONG FILM: OMOIYARI

JOYFUL NOISE RECORDINGS 2LP / CD

"Music from the Song Film: Omoiyari" is the original soundtrack to Kishi Bashi's moving documentary about his journey to confront the harsh realities of the Japanese-American internment after Pearl Harbor, and to reckon with his own identity.

MICHAEL NAU

ACCOMPANY

KARMA CHIEF RECORDS LP / CD

Michael Nau is set to release his 5th full length record under Karma Chief Records on Dec 8th. A psych-soul influence with dry and punchy drums, lush synth lines, and tastefully verb-soaked vocal production.

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Space Age Free Expression

Los Angeles artists Ray Monde and Kris Chau are collectively known as **MONDE UFO**. Their music is an intoxicating blend of free-jazz, lo-fi psych, and beginner's mind experimentalism. **DUNCAN FLETCHER** listens in

Few musical partnerships start over a tattoo. "We met at a gallery I was working at," says Ray. "Kris tattooed my feet there. They were super gross because I was sort of a pile then, but we had a really fun time." "We have a big age difference," adds Kris, "so I thought of him as just my friend. I was surprised at how fun our conversation was."

Monde UFO's debut LP *7171* is now getting a wider expanded release. Its broad influences include Sandy Bull, Gábor Szabó, Terry Riley, Lounge Lizards, Yo La Tengo, Marion Brown, Antônio Carlos Jobim, Alice and John Coltrane and Khan Jamal.

Ray began working up the songs for *7171* while living in a downtown LA warehouse, using an old Yamaha church organ as his main instrument. "The warehouse was pretty gnarly, but super cheap so it was worth it. No hot water for the first six months, cockroaches, awful neighbours, typical warehouse shit. I was doing a fair amount of drugs then so an existential crisis was never far away. In a way, that fuelled experimentation, trying to figure out what my sound was or simply seeing if anything would stick."

The live band has additional members including Kern Haug and Brian Bartus, but at the heart of Monde UFO's sound are Ray's and Kris's contrasting compositional approaches. Ray is a community college taught jazz musician, while Kris is more rooted in the visual arts and brings a beginner's mind to their musical process. "It's a bold move to put your partner with no musical experience into your personal music project" says Kris. "I didn't really understand why. Brian explained to me that it was more interesting to see someone try hard than to watch people be very good at something. His goal was to make something that still had punk roots, so that when someone saw us play it would inspire them to think 'maybe I can do this too.'"

"Kris is a great pass/fail producer," adds Ray. "She views music like a regular person, I play her stuff and she kinda wiggles but then stops when the song gets fucked-up and that's when I need to change something. She makes the band much more utilitarian. In most cases watching overly schooled musicians is very dull."

7171's reissue is expanded with four radically reinterpreted Fugazi songs. "Fugazi was super influential to the scene I grew up in" says Ray. "A friend of the band actually takes bass lessons with Joe Lally and he was telling Joe about our recordings. Apparently, Ian MacKaye had sent them over to Joe months prior. I can't imagine they're into them though."

7171 (Expanded) is out now on Fire

Safety in numbers. Ray and Kris: Monde UFO

TWO PIERS

WIG OUT! FREAK OUT!

FREAKBEAT & MOD PSYCHEDELIA
FLOORFILLERS 1964-1969

'Wig Out! Freak Out!', the latest compilation from Two-Piers, dives into the world of Freakbeat, Psych and Mod from 1964-1969. Pulling the cream of tracks from the UK & US Freakbeat and Garage scenes of the time. Aimed squarely at the Alternative & 60s Club Dancefloors it features tracks from **The Sonics, The Kinks, The Action, The Chocolate Watch Band, The Haunted, The Standells, Paul Revere & The Raiders, The Shadows of Knight, The Yardbirds, The Quick, The Spencer Davis Group, Count Five, The Seeds** and more. *'Wig Out! Freak Out!'* is packed full of Freakbeat and Mod classics as well as rare sought after nuggets.

Also available on Two Piers

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THE BEST OF SHOEGAZE 1990-2022

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Raze It To The Roof

The union of two key players in today's world of melodic psychedelia is quite the cause for excitement. **SARAH GREGORY** caught up with **RAZE REGAL** and White Denim's **JAMES PETRALLI** to discover what it's all about

The unexpected musical pairing of electric guitar virtuoso, Raze Regal and James Petralli from soul, jazz psych-rockers White Denim was borne of a deep friendship and love of music. Coming together in the heart of lockdown amidst some rather challenging circumstances, the duo managed to hunker down, fuse their musical talents and carve out a rather delightful album, the self-titled *Raze Regal & White Denim Inc*.

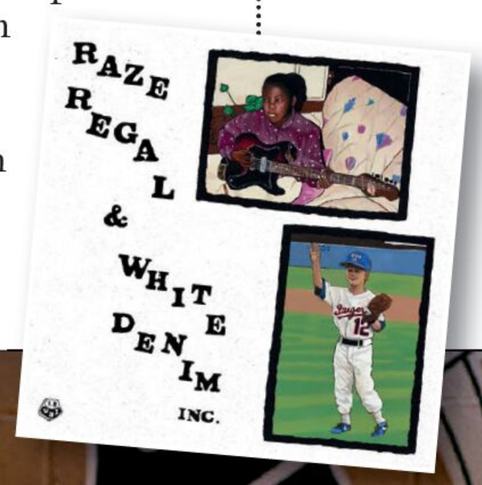
"Raze and I met on the road. [We] became fast friends and kept in touch," says Petralli. "When I saw in the press that half of his old group became Black Crowes, I extended an invitation for him to join us. I had the suspicion that he might be in need of a friend." And indeed, he was. "The trials and tribulations of that time were a constant test in one way or another, but James and I persevered and formed a brotherhood," says Regal. "This record is a testament to that."

Finding his feet in a new but incredibly vibrant musical city proved to be a catalyst for Regal. "It was a rebirth for me creatively, emotionally and spiritually," the pair bonding over everything from Eddie Harris to Steely Dan, John Cale to Sinatra. "We listened to and talked so much music over the two years," says Petralli. "That was my absolute favourite part of this collaboration." It wasn't just music that was influential either – film played its part too. Innovative creatives like Cassavetes, Altman and Ashby. "These film-makers break me out of ruts as a player and a writer," says Regal, "and also inspire me to approach the tunes as if they were films themselves."

And it was this blend of influences that effortlessly fed into their songwriting. "Most of the process was sitting and playing guitar and trying to come up with harmonically rich chord changes that would excite me," says Regal. "Other times it's very mysterious and everything happens." This organic process was followed by Petralli too as he pulled a working band together. "I hired a bandleader (Cat Clemons) to create charts and help lead a band that I assembled (all frequent WD collaborators old and new)." Then the duo hunkered up in the studio to build what we hear today.

With singles 'Dislocation' and 'Blood' providing a taster, the album is now out to buy. Regal is hitting the road with Nolan Potter and while Petralli promises more White Denim; he just isn't sure what's next.

But whatever lies ahead, in the words of Regal, "Salute and praises to all the Heads!!"



Raze Regal & White Denim Inc is out now on Bella Union

A meeting of the minds: James Petralli and Raze Regal
PHOTO: CHARLIE WEINMANN

Shine On

RUBY J bridges retro-soul sass and indie guitar-pop

Guitar wails, drums beat and horns blare, a modern take on Memphis soul. And then there's that astonishing voice, combining traces of Amy Winehouse, Duffy, even Lulu and Billie Holiday, but unmistakably her own. This is Ruby J, channelling brilliant single 'Home'. She might want the straying person to whom the song is directed back, but it will emphatically be on her terms. "I heard bad things about you," declares the singer. "The stupid shit that you do."

Still only 18 years old, the Midlands-born Ruby J has taken to the stage as a fully formed singer-songwriter whose music blends soul, jazz and leftfield influences. "I first discovered indie music as a 13-year-old," she tells *Shindig!* "It became my sole interest and made me want to pick up a guitar." Her first love was The Arctic Monkeys – "Since then I never looked back." Her influences now encompass anyone from blues great Albert King to The Doors.

Ruby has already established an international reputation. Her music is on coffee house playlists from Sweden to Oman. She has also attracted celebrity admirers such as Paloma Faith, who has extolled her "unique voice".

Signed to Lemon Sun Records, Ruby has been busy in the studio recording debut EP *Backtrack*. She's already crafting the songs for a follow-up. Of her working methods, the singer reflects, "I try not to force things," leaving unfinished songs until they are ready for her to return to them, sometimes with "a completely different idea than I had originally." You can also catch her in concert. "The live shows are the best part of being a musician," she affirms. "To be able to share your music with different crowds all over and connect with people is such a buzz."

True to her name, Ruby J is set to shine as bright as any gemstone.

As told to Clive Webb

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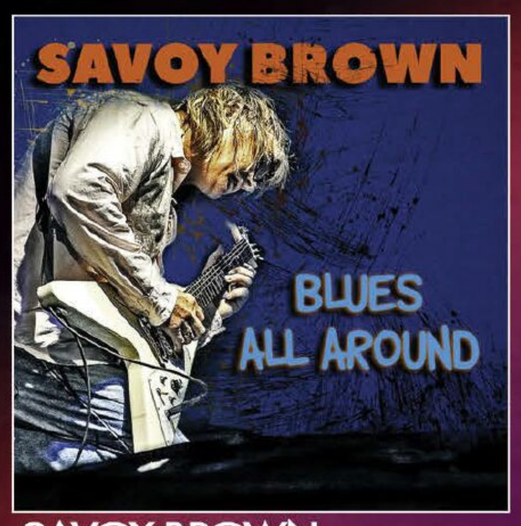
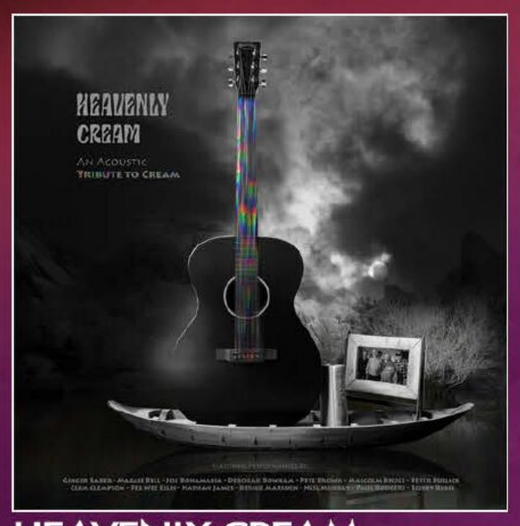
BEST OF THE YEAR 2023

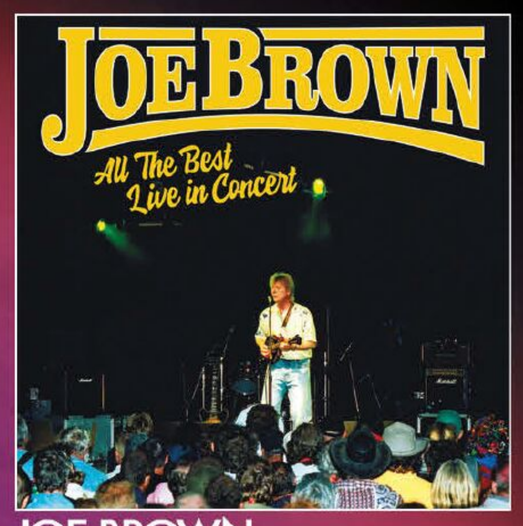


SAVOY BROWN
BLUES ALL AROUND
QUARTO VALLEY RECORDS



HEAVENLY CREAM
AN ACOUSTIC TRIBUTE TO CREAM
QUARTO VALLEY RECORDS

THE SMOKE
IT'S SMOKE TIME
MORGAN BLUE TOWN



JOE BROWN
ALL THE BEST LIVE IN CONCERT
SECRET RECORDS

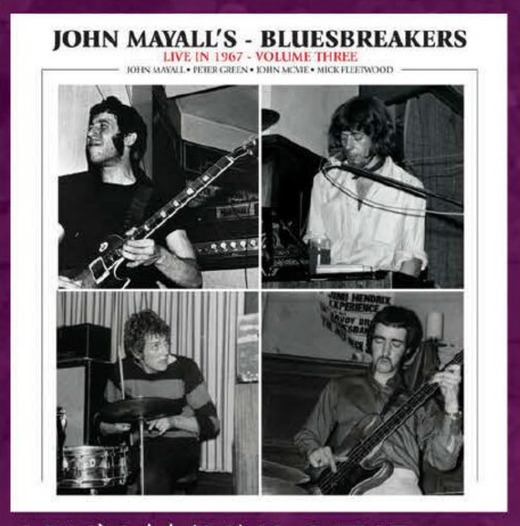
THE BLACK CROWES
SHAKE YOUR MONEY MAKER (LIVE)
SILVER ARROW RECORDS

BARENAKED LADIES
IN FLIGHT
RAISIN' RECORDS

DIRTY HONEY
CAN'T FIND THE BRAKES
DIRT RECORDS

BETTYE LAVETTE
LAVETTE!
JAY-VEE RECORDS

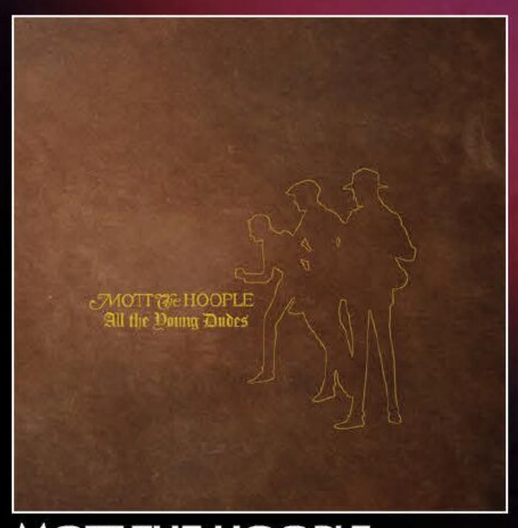
ANN WILSON & TRIPSITTER
ANOTHER DOOR
LOUJON RECORDS



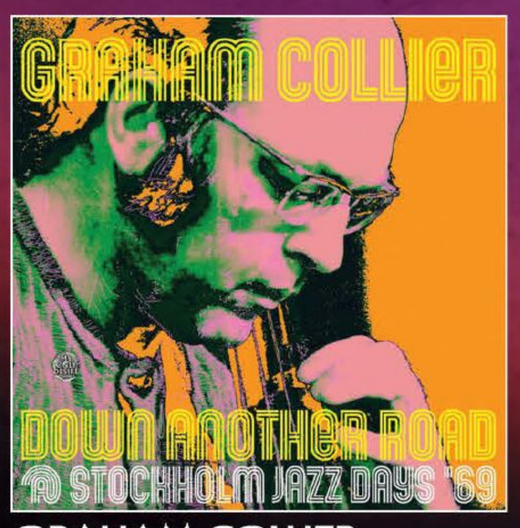
JOHN MAYALL & THE BLUESBREAKERS
LIVE IN 1967 VOLUME III
FORTY BELOW

DR FEELGOOD
DAMN RIGHT!
GRAND RECORDS

SEMISONIC
LITTLE BIT OF SUN
PLEASURESONIC RECORDINGS

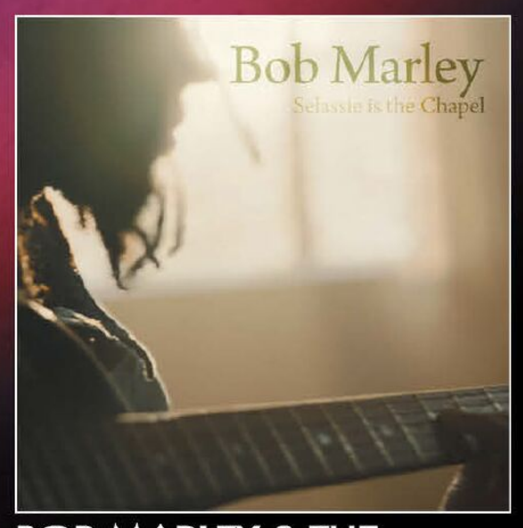


MOTT THE HOOPLE
ALL THE YOUNG DUDES (50TH ANNIVERSARY BOX SET)
MADFISH



GRAHAM COLLIER
DOWN ANOTHER ROAD @ STOCKHOLM JAZZ DAYS '69
MY ONLY DESIRE RECORDS

CIRCUS UNDERWATER
CIRCUS UNDERWATER
SOUNDWAY



BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS
SELASSIE IS THE CHAPEL
JAD

it's a **happening** thing

Silver Train

Now changing hands for vast sums, **EAST VILLAGE**'s 1993 album *Drop Out* is something of an out-of-time indie collectable. As it's reissued, **JON 'MOJO' MILLS** catches up with founder member Martin Kelly

"Paul and I grew up in a musical household, our parents and sisters loved music. With the advent of punk – me aged 11 and Paul 14 – we suddenly thought, 'We could do this,'" says Martin Kelly of his pre-teen musical awakening in rural Buckinghamshire, just north of London. "By the time we'd become vaguely proficient, and I mean vaguely, punk was long since over, and we were exploring '60s garage-rock and freakbeat. Mike Spenser, who ran the Klub Foot at the Clarendon, was the first person to offer us a London gig after hearing a cassette of us rehearsing songs by ? & The Mysterians, The Eyes and The Pretty Things. We supported groups like The Prisoners and Thee Milkshakes there but had already begun writing our own songs, and the sound was already changing."

It didn't take long for Episode Four to change name to the more boho East Village, and a sound palette inspired by forlorn jangle. "When Johnny Wood joined the group, we suddenly found we had three songwriters and three vocalists, and were enjoying collaborating on each other's songs," recalls Kelly. "Within a year Spencer Smith had joined on drums and everything clicked. The covers went out the window and we were making our own music. The Byrds and the Buffalo Springfield were logical influences as we'd effectively morphed into a contemporary folk-rock group.

"We'd been into Orange Juice, The Smiths and the Bunnymen, so by the time C86 came around it wasn't really a surprise; but there weren't many groups from that scene that we really liked. Primal Scream, My Bloody Valentine, Loop and a few others. We never felt part of the C86 thing or any scene particularly – we were doing our own thing, but it certainly offered up great places to play and good bands to play with. It's amazing how segregated the mainstream charts and the indie scene were in the '80s and how that would change by the early '90s."

This change was undeniably ushered in by The Stone Roses, who East Village fell for. In a big way. "Jeff Barrett, our label boss at Head, and later Heavenly Recordings, played us an advance copy of the Roses LP about six-eight weeks before it came out," says Kelly. "We'd seen them play live and really liked them, but listening to that just blew us away. They'd nailed so many things we'd wanted to do. It was tough and confident, and embraced a whole host of influences that we shared. It felt like a seismic change and one that was needed."

Dance music came in and became the focus, and after a couple of singles, East Village saw the writing on the way. Fortunately, Saint Etienne's Bob Stanley pay rolled studio time in January 1990 for a proposed album at The Stone Room. Engineer Ian Capel dispensed with the gated drums that ruined so many earlier indie records and offered a timeless production. Thee Hypnotics' Will Pepper guested on the fantastic 'Silver Train', and things were looking good, but by '91 it was all over for East Village, just as a new wave of indie guitar bands were on the rise. Two years on, the unmixed album was taken to Bark Studios for Brian O'Shaunessy to mix and finally gained a belated release on Heavenly.

"I hadn't listened to *Drop Out* for quite a few years," closes Martin. "It may sound corny, but I was surprised how undated it sounds. It's very measured and could have been recorded in the late '60s, early '70s or yesterday. It captures the band really well at a great moment."

Drop Out is out now on Heavenly

Tousle-haired and dressed in black. East Village

hear & now

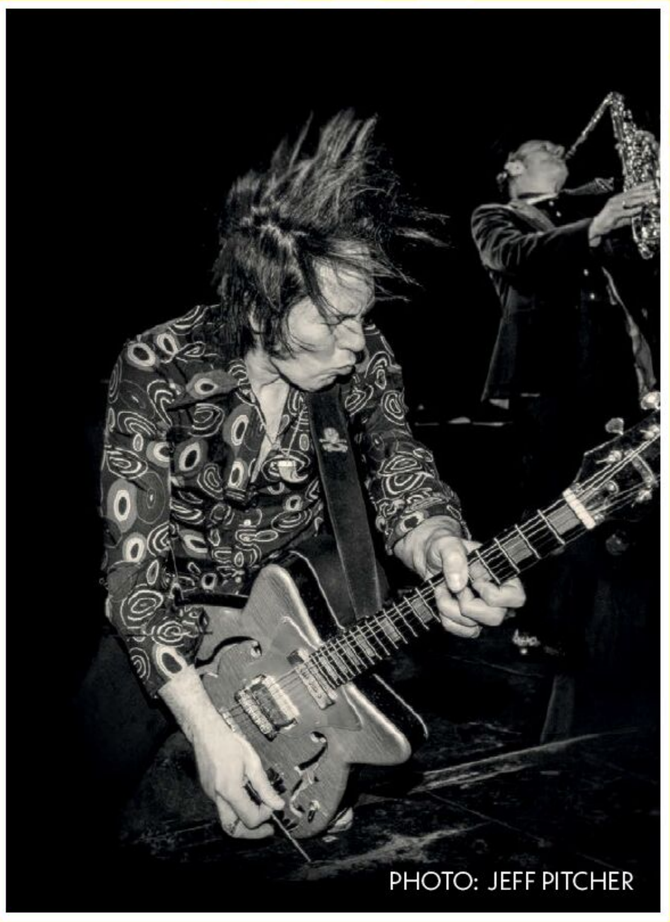


PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

Jim Jones All Stars' **JIM JONES** shares his current fave raves

LISTENING (OLD)

Ace Records' *The Ace Story Volumes 1-3*. These are fantastic compilation albums of early rock 'n' roll stuff. And it's a continuing pleasure to discover songs that stop you dead in your tracks and make you say, "How did I get this far without hearing this before?" My current favourite is 'Rock 'n' Roll Baby' by Mercy Baby aka Julius W 'Jimmy' Mullins, a drummer, singer and songwriter from Mississippi. It's a driving groove with a New Orleans flavour.

LISTENING (NEW)

Idles' *Dancer*. They're a brilliant Bristol band that's rowdy and rude, but I like that there's always a strut to their groove. I like Joe Talbot's lyrics because there's always something interesting to find in them. This new single features LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy and Nancy Wang, which is cool. The production is fat and juicy and I'm digging it.

READING

The History Of Bones by John Lurie. I first saw John Lurie in *Down By Law*, the Jim Jarmusch movie from the mid-80s. He played Jack, the tall good-looking one. It's an autobiography and you get to read some great stories, many set in Alphabet City in New York, about his adventures and misadventures as an artist, actor, musician, and composer. I'm loving it.

WATCHING

Coming Apart (1969). A young Rip Torn plays a New York psychiatrist who's going through a divorce and on the way to a mental breakdown. Everything takes place in an apartment he's rented, and the point of view is all from a hidden camera where he records his visits and sexual encounters – all static, documentary footage-style. It's very much an artefact of its time: '60s, '70s. I can't imagine a film like this being made today, or maybe I'm just out of the loop?

As told to Andy Morten

Ain't No Peril is out now on Ako-Lite

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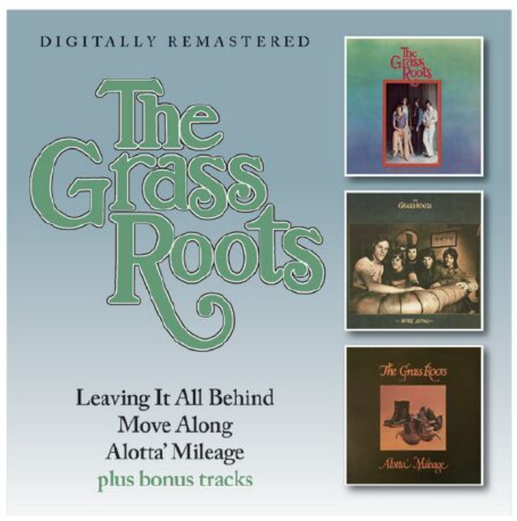
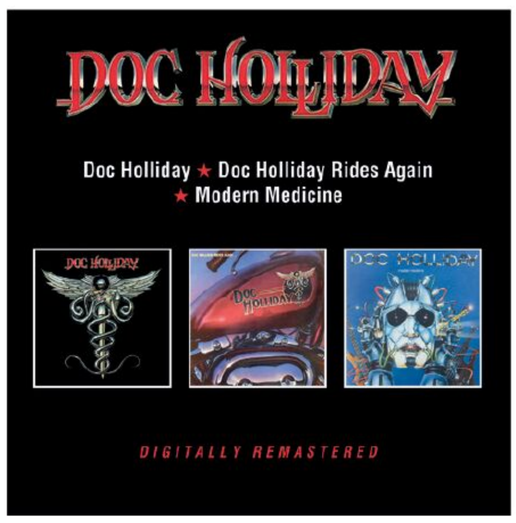
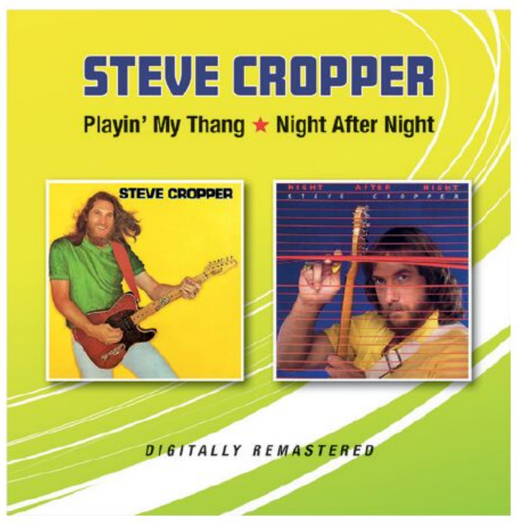


THE GRASS ROOTS
Leaving It All Behind /
Move Along / Alotta' Mileage
+ bonus tracks
BGOCD1510

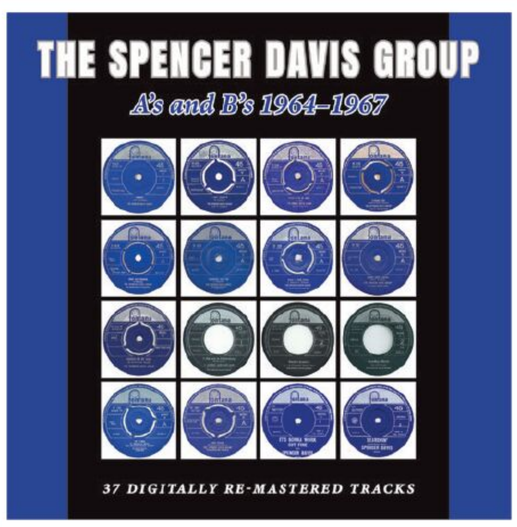


DOC HOLLIDAY
Doc Holliday / Doc Holliday
Rides Again / Modern Medicine
BGOCD1509

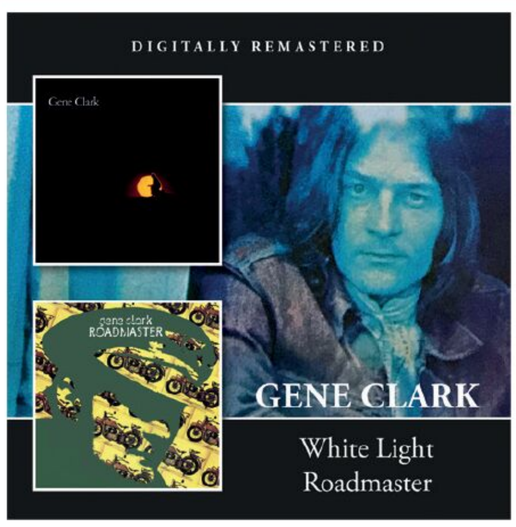
GEORGIE FAME
Yeh Yeh / Get Away /
Hall Of Fame + bonus tracks
BGOCD1500



STEVE CROPPER
Playin' My Thang /
Night After Night
BGOCD1495



THE SPENCER DAVIS GROUP
A's and B's 1964–1967
BGOCD1492



GENE CLARK
White Light / Roadmaster
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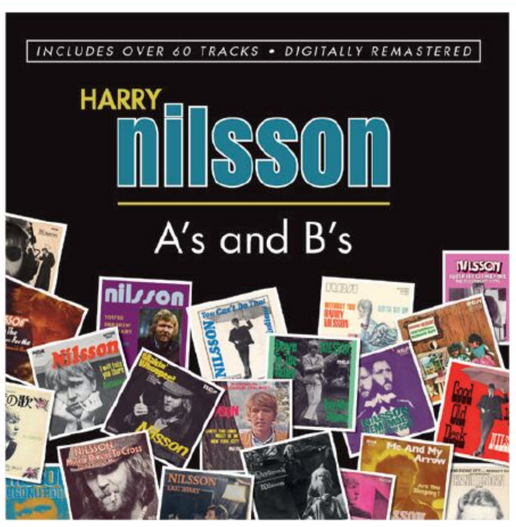
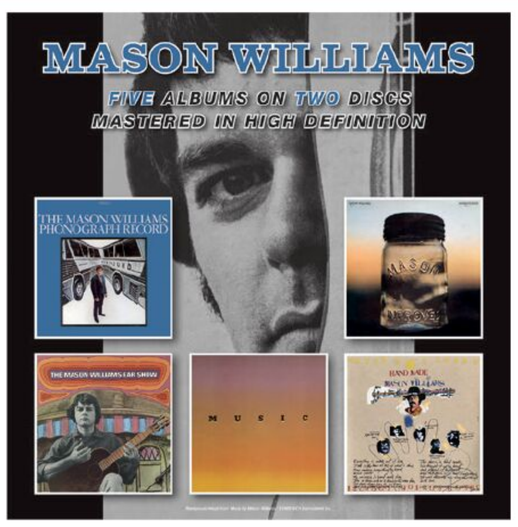


HARRY NILSSON
A's and B's
BGOCD1477 (3 disc digipack)



MASON WILLIAMS
The Mason Williams Phonograph
Record / Mason Williams Ear Show /
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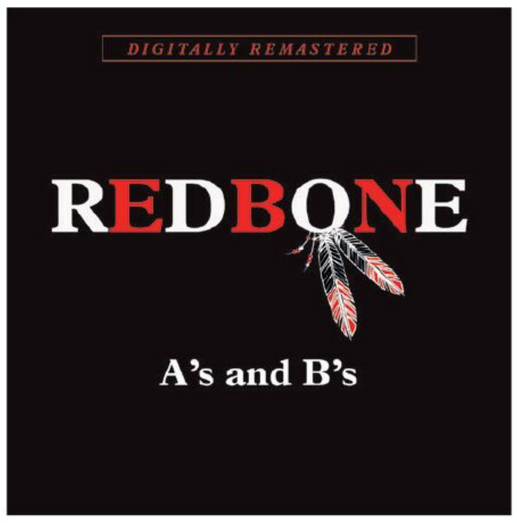

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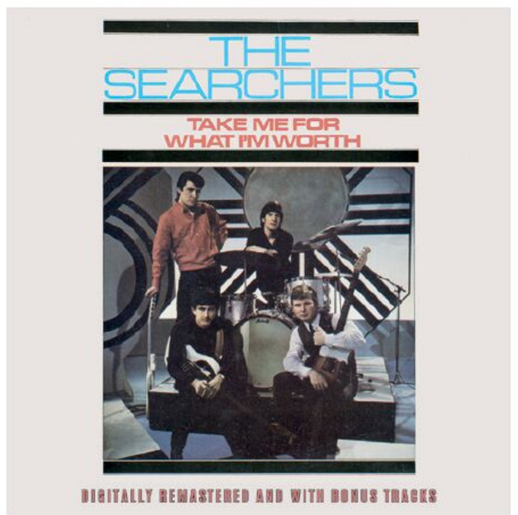

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it's a **happening** thing

Children Of The Night

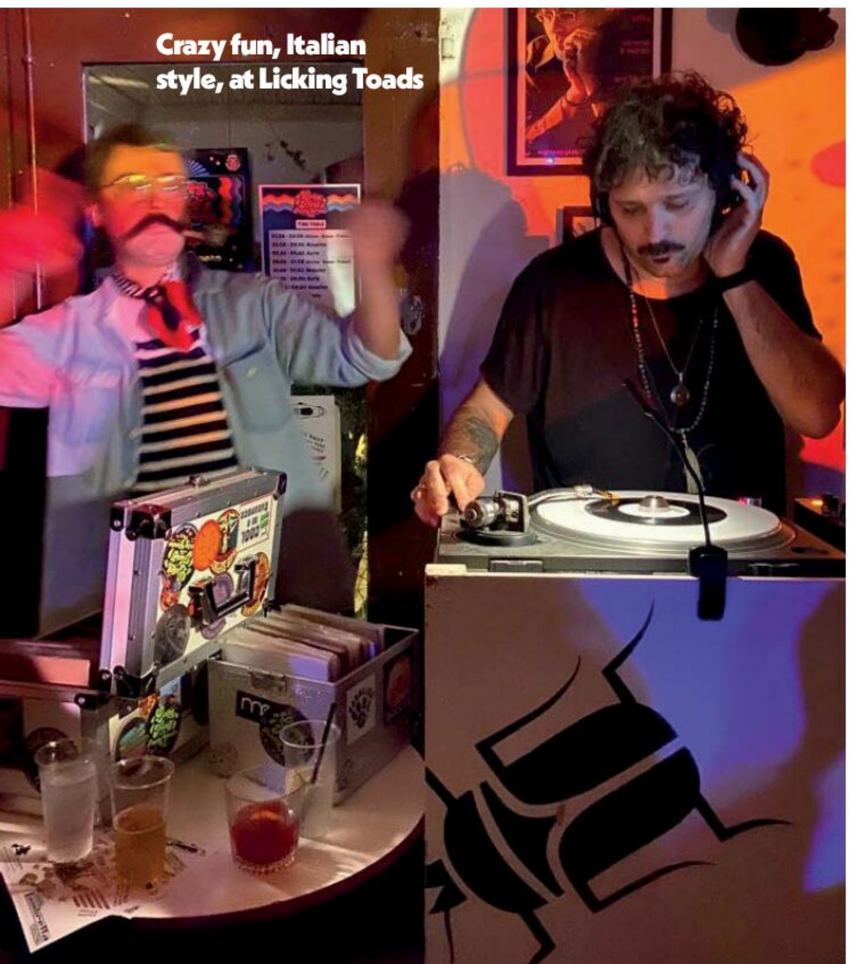
MILLEN BROWN EWENS burrows underground to follow the sounds arising from the scene makers of the modern age

There's a rumble about town. In the labyrinthine streets of Europe's musical landscape, there's a current that runs just beneath the surface, a pulse that is felt more than heard, a reverberation of rebellion and nostalgia that thrives in the shadows. Filling the void left behind by the piecemeal closures of several stellar live music venues are a string of happenings that capture the raw intimacy of live shows before they became overpriced and overproduced spectacles. Below are just a small selection of the club nights and socials that attest to a powerful revival of a sound that has never truly disappeared.

THE BOOM BOOM ROOM, LONDON

The Boom Boom Room is London's newest and slickest of sets positioning itself as a rock preservation society and underground social club consisting of some of the city's most ambitious young artists, designers, writers, and makers. Launched by dancer, vocalist and cultural curator Blake Avenue, the evenings draw an unpretentious yet modish crowd, eager to network and unanimous in their passion to preserve the culture and community of rock 'n' roll. While London's music scene is steeped in the traditions of classic rock, it's far from stagnant. From alt-folk and funk to classic rock 'n' roll, The Boom Boom Room hosts two "chin-up" bands to play a quality 40-minute set highlighting emerging artists that produce a fresh yet evocative sound. In the past year, they've compered the likes of The Sitar Service, Fez and Strangebrew, where soaring guitar solos, pulsating bass lines and exotic melodies set the crowd alight.

Their next event will be held at The Troubadour on 12th December.



Crazy fun, Italian style, at Licking Toads

THE UP CLUB, FRANKFURT

Frankfurt's music scene may seem obscure when compared to global musical hotspots, but its nightlife offers a transformative experience for those in the know. The Up Club night – which has been going for over 30 years – pride themselves on sharing the delights of the multi-faceted psychedelic spectrum with vinyl mixers and live bands from all over the continent. Stepping inside a cave of wonders, power couple Marc-André and Teagan-Marie Brucker and their partner Konrad Hasse's presentation feels like an embodiment of the city's own dual identity, where past and future coalesce in a mesmerising fusion of rock and psychedelia. Most recently they welcomed Looking Glass Alice, a trio of charming *avant*-pop alchemists who twirled through their arsenal of samplers and instruments against a kaleidoscopic *son et lumière*. With their regular crowd of alt girls and young guns moving their feet until dawn, the poised and beloved Up Club serves as a reminder that in the heart of this financial hub there exists a thriving artistic counterculture where music is a gateway to new dimensions.

The Up Club will return on 3rd February 2024.

LICKING TOADS, RECANTI

In the small medieval Italian town of Recanti, Francesco Moretti is whipping up a storm. A far cry from the operatic traditions of the east coast commune, Moretti serves up an underground psychedelic all-nighter, held at La Serra and brazenly named Licking Toads. Italy, like much of Europe, certainly experienced the wave of mind-bending sounds emerging from the '60s. Bands like Le Orme and Il Rovescio della Medaglia embraced psychedelic rock influences, often incorporating Italian lyrics into their songs. But the country hasn't ever really been on the map. Licking Toads is righting some wrongs. Its past editions have welcomed some extremely talented disc jockeys of the local scene, strictly spinning original 45s – mainly psych, boogaloo, freakbeat, garage and other sounds of the late '60s and early '70s – that meet in a melting pot of cosmic liquidity.

25th November is one to put in your calendars if you're in the area.

If you run or visit an exciting club night, please let us know

good **news**

Tired of following contemporary clothing trends? **THE HIPPIE SHAKE** has the solution. Eschewing fast fashion, the company is committed to the manufacture of clothes from sustainable and organic fabrics. Their new collection for men and women, *On Tour '74*, is ideal for anyone who wants to walk in the stack-heeled steps of Marc Bolan and Sonja Kristina. From the Lady Stardust Cream Shaggy Jacket to the Cosmic Voyage Galactic Wide Leg Jumpsuit there's plenty to transform your wardrobe from glum to glam. Those who prefer Primark may still want to check out the website for bespoke performances from the likes of FUR and Katy J Pearson.
thehippieshake.co.uk

Sshhh! **SECRET RECORDS** have announced some enticing releases from the Morgan Blue Town stable for early next year. Coming in January is the 3-CD box set *Old Feet New Socks: The Many Faces Of Wil Malone 1965-72*, showcasing the early work of the musician and producer who later found fame composing scores for the likes of Massive Attack and The Verve. Expect cuts from The Robb Storme Group, The Orange Bicycle, Fickle Pickle, Bobak Jons Malone and Wil's numerous early '70s outings. Also out that month is a colour vinyl edition of budget psychedelic rockers The Five Day Week Straw People's sole album, while February sees a red vinyl reissue of the eponymous debut from Yorkshire bluesmen Red Dirt, an album favourably compared to Captain Beefheart.
secretrecordslimited.com

Filmmaker Denny Tedesco scored a critical and commercial hit in 2008 with his documentary *The Wrecking Crew*, which narrated the history of the Los Angeles studio musicians who performed on some of the greatest recordings of the 1960s. This December he follows that story with ***THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY***, which focuses on another team of legendary session players, Danny Kortchmar. Russ Kunkel, Leland Sklar and Waddy Wachtel. Winner of numerous festival audience awards, the film features interviews not only with its principal subjects but also many of the artists with who they have collaborated, including Jackson Browne, Carole King and James Taylor.
immediatefamilyfilm.com

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"Fictionary...A feast for the ears... Andy Golding's most diverse, and arguably his best Dragon Welding output thus far."
Echoes and Dust

"Lights Behind the Eyes is something different and refreshing – still retaining the acute observations of the Wolfhounds, but taking the music in other directions entirely. "
Louder Than War

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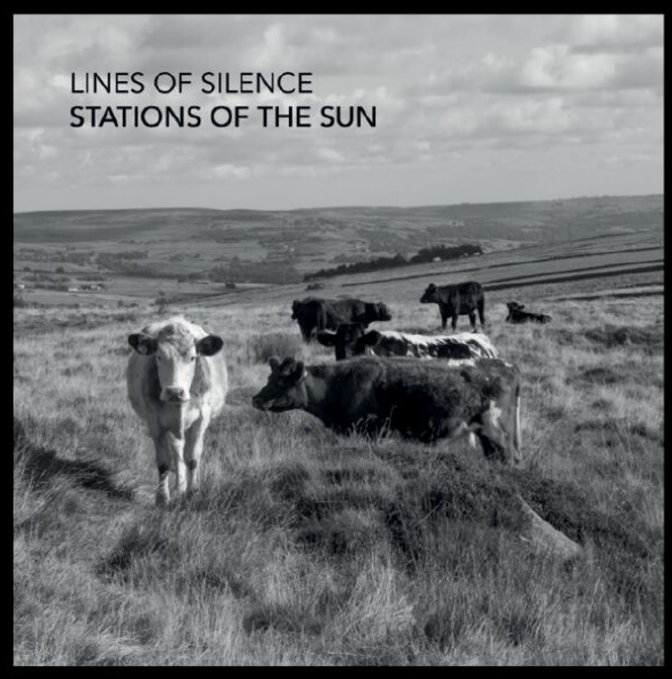
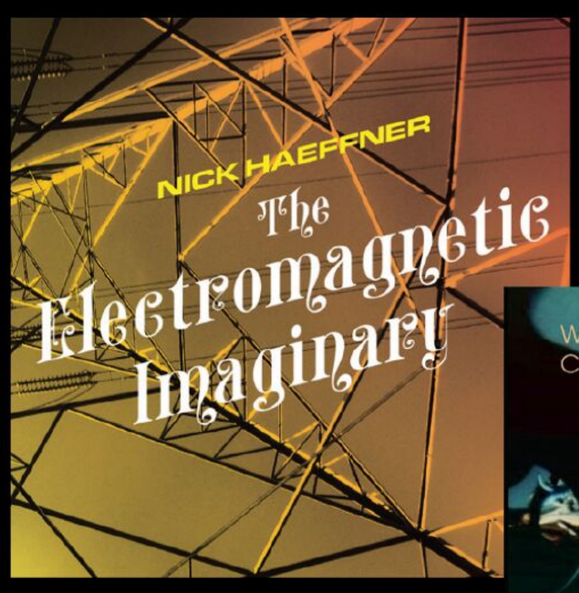


LINES OF SILENCE

"Stations of the Sun is superb ...
Beautiful atmosphere, beautiful sound..."
Amaury Cambuzat, FaUSt, Ulan Bator, I Feel Like a Bombed Cathedral

"[Stations of the Sun] is a fantastic album, full of depth with an expansive sound. The layers of sonics build beautifully throughout the tracks and the production is crystal clear and warm."
Dave Clarkson, Scissorgun / Spectral Bazaar / Cavendish House

linesofsilence.bandcamp.com/album/stations-of-the-sun



NICK HAEFFNER

"Nick Haeffner is a favourite radio station broadcasting from outside time, a cascading swoon of hits from a parallel world; from a future English musical landscape that might have been... one of the country's most wonderful secret voices."
Alan Moore

nickhaeffnerdimplediscs.bandcamp.com/album/what-time-can-do-2

THE MUSIC OF SOUND

Pastoral cinematic music from the forthcoming album Eleven Short Stories due in early 2024.

'This is a beautiful track'
Michelle Ward, Eat My Brunch, Phoenix FM

'Blowing my mind with this, The album is going to be so good'
Del Owusu, Songbird Sessions, Islington Radio

'... unique combination of avant-garde tendencies and pop sensibilities'
Max Reinhardt, Late Junction, BBC Radio 3

dimplediscsthemusicofsound.bandcamp.com/track/first-light

(DIMPLE DISCS)

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dimplediscs.bandcamp.com

it's a **happening** thing

Unsanitised

THE GULLS take Tess Carges aboard their psychedelic train to discuss latest singles and the trio's soaring future

"Be cheeky, be outrageous, break the mold and don't worry about what people will say – that's a philosophy we prefer." And it's a philosophy that The Gulls embody. The Brighton trio, comprising Will Fairhead on bass, Kilian Aubertin on guitar, and Tali Knight on drums, have had quite the year refining their craft and breaking the mold. With a handful of fantastic singles and an ambitious few months of touring, The Gulls are unstoppable. An out-and-out rock 'n' roll outfit, their sound draws comparisons with The Beatles and Pink Floyd yet sounds modern and fresh.

Recent single 'Sanitation' is a fantastic afront on cleanliness; "There's a modern obsession with being clean and living up to authorised standards of sanitation. It stops being just common sense and ends up as paranoia. We're good at finding solutions to making more problems for ourselves. Did the pandemic make that even worse? Maybe." The trio tolerates no nonsense. Their irony is biting, but still inclusive. They sing with a cheeky grin, inviting listeners to question some of the stupidity that passes them by.

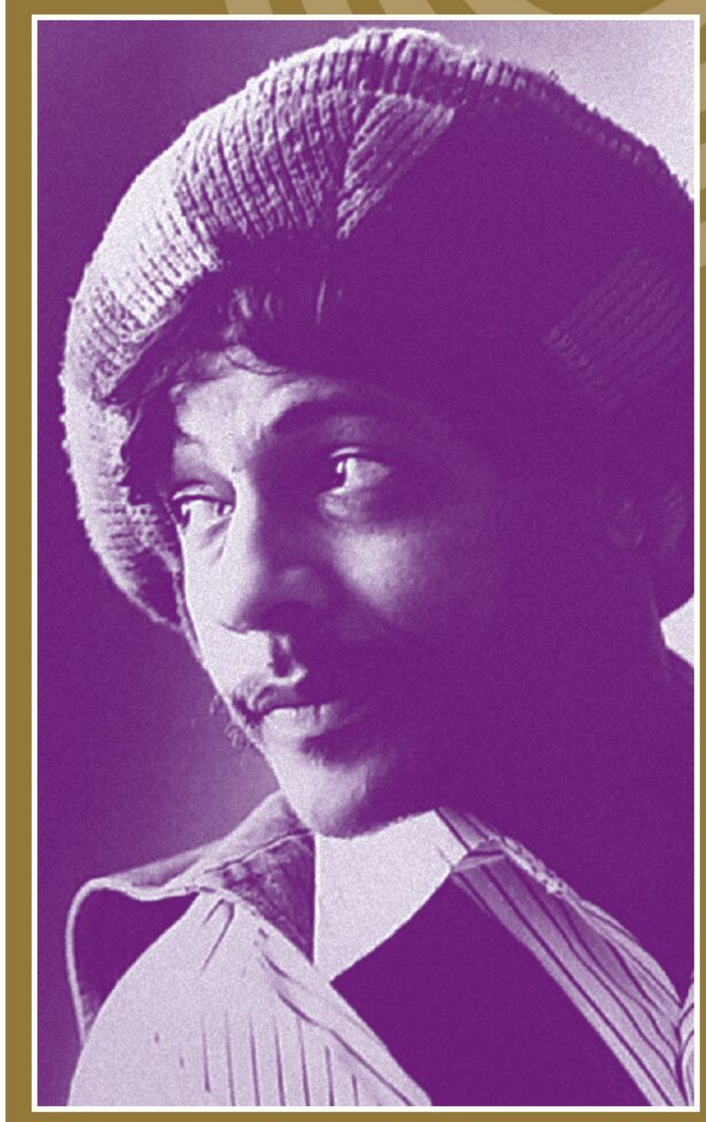
The Gulls don't just sing about injustice and inanity, they work to fight it. Twenty-twenty-three saw the second instalment of The Robin Hood Tour – a tour in which all proceeds went to UK Food Banks. "We knew from our time on the road that we had a knack for pulling off rogue outdoor concerts in public spaces… And the whole point of it was to make it very open so that anybody from any walk of society could go to the concerts. We had some great gigs. It was a non-commercial thing without any kind of council authorisation. We took donations to give to The Trussell Trust for the UK food banks." Whether playing an impromptu set in the street, or a meticulously crafted show at a festival, The Gulls take care to create a free-wheeling, loving environment.

Looking ahead to 2024, we can expect The Gulls' first full-length album as a trio and another Robin Hood Tour. "There will be a third: bigger and better than ever." When asked what we might expect from the album, we get an unsurprising response: "We wanna make an album that moves people. Makes them wanna dance, makes them wanna laugh, makes them wanna cry, makes them wanna make love, makes them wanna grab life. It's not gonna be a background album. Expect to be taken on a journey."

Visit the-gulls.com for updates

Petrel heads? Nope. No cars for The Gulls

next issue



ARTHUR LEE
Reel life: Love's leader gets down and dangerous in the '70s

DWIGHT TWILLEY
An appreciation of the recently departed powerpop icon

WIL MALONE
From bicycles to pickle, we dissect the musician/arranger's early work

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New Distractions

by Dream Phases - NER-048

Emerging from the City of Angels' neo-psychedelic rock scene in 2017, Dream Phases reflects Calfornia's natural splendor and adventuresome inner spirit in its music.

The earthy-yet-exalted sounds of the Byrds, the Beach Boys and Crosby, Stills, Nash ,Young – as well as latter-dayartists like the Rain Parade, Elliott Smith and Autolux – figure into the band's family tree. Whilethis lineage is worth noting, what comes through in the band's latest work is an individual approach that translates the experiences of its members into something undeniably compelling.

First track to last, you can hear this vitality in New Distractions, Dream Phases' sophomore album.

Vinyl LP, Cassette, CD
available through Nomad Eel Records

EXCLUSIVE RELEASES

Hold Drugs Dear

By R.J. Bloke - NER-049

Hold Drugs Dear is a dynamic solo effort from RJ Bloke, front man & songwriter for Los Angeles based alt-country, americana, roots rock quartet Patrolled By Radar.

These warm and urgent analog recordings feature an array of stellar guests including Alex Moore, Spencer Livingston (Livingmore), Eli Wulfmeier (Leroy from the North), Peter Curry (Los Straitjackets, Nick Lowe), and Davey Allen (Eric Burdon, Davey & The Midnights).

This collection of well-crafted poetic and melodic songs are sure to appeal to fans of Dylan, Ray Davies, Jeff Tweedy, Lennon & Paul McCartney and many more, truly magificent.

Vinyl LP, Cassette, CD
available through Nomad Eel Records

"Yeah, it does get very psychedelic, doesn't it?" Chris Farlowe takes in the view from The Hill

King Of The Hill

FROM HERE TO MAMA ROSA was the sole album by the group doing business as Chris Farlowe With The Hill. Despite being a progressive pop delight with plenty of psychedelic touches and unexpected arrangements, it's often missing from overviews of Farlowe's work as it skips from the mid-60s Immediate years to his early '70s stint with Colosseum.

ANDREW URE chats with **CHRIS FARLOWE** about the album the singer considers a highpoint of his six-decade career

"People used to say to me, 'What are you gonna do when you grow up?'" begins Chris Farlowe, "and I used to say, 'I'm gonna be a famous singer,' and they'd laugh. But it came true." The North Londoner's recording career began in 1961 when a 15-year-old Jimmy Page produced a session for Farlowe's band The Thunderbirds at RG Jones's studio in Morden, South London. Those recordings, some of the earliest examples of British rock 'n' roll/R&B, were finally released by Page in 2017 as *The Beginning*…. There followed a continuous stream of singles and albums both with The Thunderbirds and under his own name, the most famous of which is of course '66 UK #1 'Out Of Time', written by Jagger/Richards and produced by Jagger. By '69 Farlowe's label Immediate was faltering, and the singer was spending a lot of time touring in the USA.

Back at home a new band was emerging from the ashes of The Thunderbirds. Bass player Bruce Waddell, aka Bugs, recruited his friend Colin Davy on drums, Steve Hammond on guitar and Peter Robinson on keyboards. The Hill managed to get one 45 released on Immediate in '69, just before the label went belly up, but it only appeared in the US and Canada. 'Sylvie' is a stirring, dramatic piece of orchestrated pop written by Waddell and Hammond. The curiously titled instrumental flip 'The Fourth Annual Convention Of The Battery Hen Farmers Association Part II' was credited to all four members. With no label left to support a release by an unknown band in a foreign

territory, the the single sank without trace.

Waddell and Hammond continued to work up new material for The Hill, bringing in another musician to act as a producer and songwriting partner. That was Stuart Mackay, whose name might not be instantly familiar to readers but who had been bass player in Tintern Abbey, a band that surely needs no introduction here. As Stuart explains, "I had turned professional and gone to London with the band The Sect to be Steve Hammond's backing group for 'I Think We're Alone Now'," released as a single on Pye in '67. When nothing came of that venture Mackay co-founded Tintern Abbey with David McTavish, and when that group called it a day in early '69, Stuart got back in touch with Steve. "We started writing songs and he said he wanted me to meet Bugs, who'd been bass player with Chris and The Thunderbirds. Bugs and I became the best of friends and collaborated on many compositions."

Farlowe on stage somewhere in the US, 1969; The Hill's sole, US-only 45; 'Black Sheep Of The Family' 45; *From Here To Mama Rosa* album insert

"It was completely new music to me. I let the boys in the band know just to go ahead and do what they want to do"

Meanwhile, Chris had signed up with a new label, Polydor. "As soon as they knew I wasn't with Immediate anymore, they offered me a contract," he explains. "Bruce [Bugs] said that Chris still had some sort of contract to make another album," continues Stuart, "and that he would play him some of our material and see if he would consider doing some of the numbers." Chris liked what he heard. "They were great musicians, and great songwriters as well," he says of The Hill. "It was completely new music to me. I let the boys in the band know just to go ahead and do what they want to do. I had nothing to do with the compositions or anything." Chris recalls suggesting a certain lyric change here and there because he thought it suited his voice better, "but I would never ask for a share of the song. It's not my song, it's their song".

With the addition of cellist Paul Buckmaster, who'd recently worked on David Bowie's 'Space Oddity' and would go on to work extensively with Elton John, all the pieces were in place for sessions to begin at Olympic. Nine songs made up the album with eight of them being written by combinations of Waddell, Hammond and Mackay. "When I went into the studio and started singing their songs I thought, 'Wow, this is different,'" remembers Chris. And the resulting album does indeed sound like nothing Farlowe had done before, and like no other progressive pop record of the day. The combination of a deeply soulful voice, bluesy hard-rock, funky basslines, extended musical workouts, and plenty of cello creates a unique sonic palette. And then there are the choral female vocals on several tracks. "Bugsy was going out with one of the girls from Canterbury Cathedral choir," says Chris. Stuart remembers, "She had a sister and Bugs and I persuaded them to come to the studio and do the haunting angelic refrains."

Chris's favourite song on the album is 'Head In The Clouds', an atmospheric seven-minute epic with an extended organ fade. "Yeah, it does get very psychedelic, doesn't it?" he comments. Stuart offers an explanation of sorts. "Olympic had a strict 'No Smoking' policy and I remember Chris [Kimsey, one of the engineers working on the album] arranging for he and I to come back after the studio was closed and we went out onto the rooftop to have a smoke before doing the final mix."

Other highlights include 'Questions', with its dominating cello riff and guitar feedback interplay. The contrast between the angelic female vocals and Chris's hard-edged delivery on 'Fifty Years', combined with the lovely chorus melody, makes for perfect ear candy. 'Mama Rosa', allegedly about a cannabis dealer in Fulham Road in the early '60s, ends the album in dramatic fashion with stratospheric guitar and strings. It sounds to this writer like it could have inspired The Carpenters' 'Goodbye To Love' (and that should be taken as a compliment of the highest order). The hard-rocking 'Black Sheep Of The Family' was pulled as a single and is propelled by an excellent bassline played by Mackay, who recalls that when they promoted it with a TV appearance on *Top Of The Pops*, "Paul Buckmaster put on an Afro wig to disguise himself and stood in for Pete Robinson on keyboard as he was contracted with someone else and could not appear."

The album came out in September '70 but, by all accounts, there wasn't too much in the way of promotion or support. Consequently, it didn't sell particularly well. Chris soon joined Colosseum and The Hill broke up, with members heading off into various successful musical careers.

"It was amazing the way Chris made the numbers his own and brought such a great performance despite not having many rehearsals," says Stuart. Chris is still performing today, recently touring Europe with Colosseum and backing Van Morrison in a series of shows. A new documentary on his career is due next year. Looking back over the years Chris concludes, "I've sung every genre of music, from the blues and skiffle to jazz and funk and rock and rockabilly – I've done it all." But rarely has he done any of that better than on *From Here To Mama Rosa*, the lost album that paved the way to his '70s career and beyond. S!

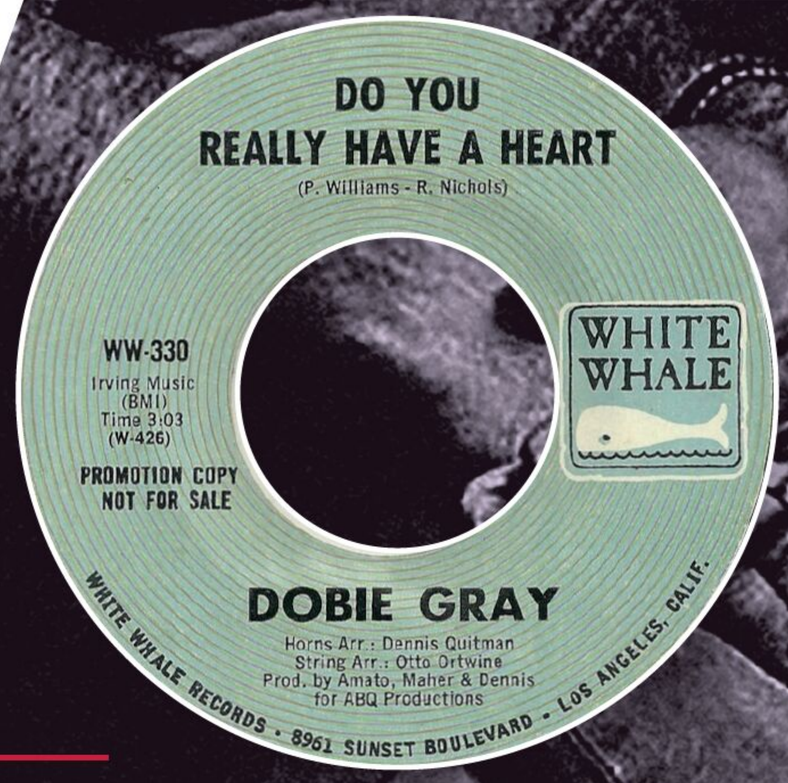
With thanks to Danny Wilson and Jason Barnard

Paul Williams and Roger Nichols get to the heart of the matter

Long Ago And Oh So Far Away

Before they ushered in the soft-rock sound of early '70s FM radio with a string of evergreen hits for The Carpenters, Three Dog Night, Barbara Streisand and more, Paul Williams and Roger Nichols spent a year woodshedding what would become Williams' debut album *Someday Man*. One of its many highlights is '**DO YOU REALLY HAVE A HEART?**', recorded by a string of artists, somehow without cracking the charts

ANDY MORTEN searches for a little human kindness



"I think that my songwriting was at its best when it was authentic; when I was writing about what was going on in my own chest," Paul Williams told Steve Stanley for the liner notes to Collectors Choice's 2005 reissue of *Someday Man*. "I've always said that I write in American instead of English, you know? 'Love, soft as at easy chair' is not exactly Keats. But it's my own voice. When I write honestly about what I feel, and other people respond to it, I'm not alone."

Williams remains, for many, the acerbically funny '70s US TV chat show raconteur and award-winning composer of scores for *Bugsy Malone* and *Phantom Of The Paradise,* in which he also starred, being a "failed actor" before it ever dawned on him to become a songwriter. Drawn to the LA music scene of the mid-60s, he played acoustic guitar on Richie Havens' debut *Mixed Bag* while honing his craft, eventually placing songs with The Collage, Claudine Longet and Biff Rose, with whom he co-wrote 'Fill Your Heart', later covered by David Bowie on *Hunky Dory*. He joined his brother Mentor in short-lived six-piece aggregation The Holy Mackerel, who split before their self-titled sole album appeared in late 1968. On that album is 'Bitter Honey', a song co-written with Roger Nichols, who would become instrumental in Williams' future as both writer and recording artists.

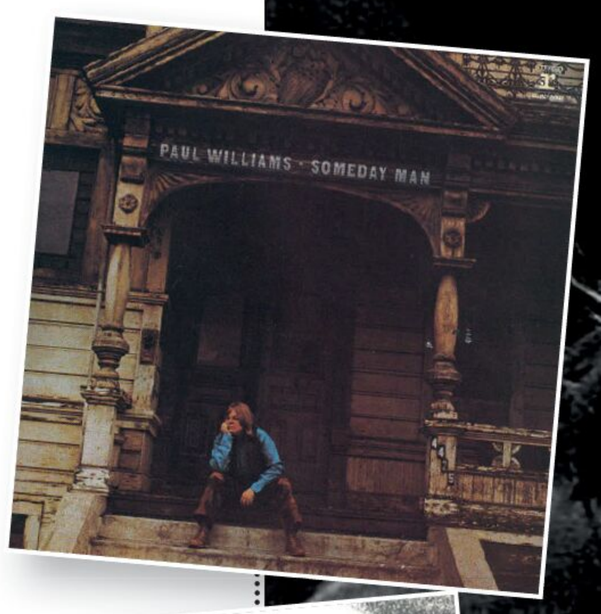
Nichols too was finding his sea legs as a jobbing songwriter/producer/musician/all-around go-to guy, whose songs had been cut by The Sundowners, Sunshine Company and, crucially, Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass. Alpert signed Nichols to his A&M label for a '68 album as Roger Nichols & The Small Circle Of Friends, now a justifiably treasured soft-pop artefact. As Nichols' lyricist Tony Asher (he of *Pet Sounds* fame) became increasingly unavailable due to his day job (Day job? He co-wrote 'God Only Knows' for Christ's

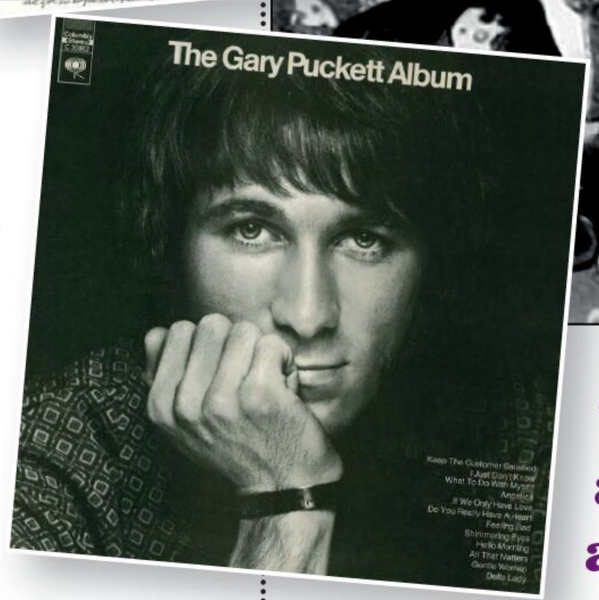
sake!), Nichols turned to Williams and embarked on amphetamine-assisted all-night writing sessions that birthed songs quickly recorded by The Monkees ('Someday Man'), José Feliciano ('She's Too Good To Me'), The Peppermint Trolley Company ('Trust') and The American Breed ('To Put Up With You'), and which would form the backbone of Williams' debut outing as a solo artist. "Nichols would write a melody that I'd like and then he'd lock me in the office and wouldn't let me out until I'd finished," the five-foot-two Williams witheringly recalled to *American Songwriter* website in 2020. "Roger's six-foot-five and he'd make me stay, so all my lyrics were written to existing melodies."

The pair's creations eschewed the musical fads of the day, instead leaning into bruised, heartfelt ruminations on life and love. "'In A Gadda Da Vida', was the big song at the time," Williams told *American Songwriter* when considering this anachronism, "so to come along with something as schmaltzy as 'We've Only Just Begun' and to have it take off like it did… nobody expected it." Williams' friend and collaborator Richard Barone summed it up best in the liner notes to Ship To Shore's 2018 reissue of *Someday Man*. "Paul's universal themes of defeat, heartbreak and ultimate redemption married to Nichols' sweeping melodies telegraphed resurrection and bittersweet hope."

Someday Man, produced and arranged by Nichols and featuring core Wrecking Crew players, was in the bag by September '69. Alongside lush, lightly orchestrated readings of previously recorded Williams/Nichols songs was 'Do You Really Have A Heart?', a heartfelt plea for understanding ("Do you really have a heart? / Don't you think it's time you used it? / If you really have a heart / Try it out and do some good.") The song's effortless commerciality and message of brotherly love singled it out for instant re-interpretation.

Dobie Gray's smooth, soulful take was first out of the traps, released in September; the versatile singer would revisit the song, adding a dose of wah-wah for the self-titled '71 album by his soul/funk collective Pollution. Popular singer/actress Jaye P Morgan also tuned into the song's inherent funkiness, including a lively version on '70's odds and ends set *What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life?* Williams' *Someday Man* reading appeared in June, its writers and producer reining in the tempo to accentuate the message and the exhilarating leap into double-time on the choruses. Country singer-songwriter Lori Parker offered a version on the flip of a February '70 single, while post-Union Gap Gary Puckett turned in a typically overcooked version on '71's *The Gary Puckett Album*, and New Zealand pop star Craig Scott snuck an unremarkable take onto the same year's covers-reliant *Smiley*. Perhaps the most unusual stab at the song was on a late '69 single by Mexican all-girl band Las Chic's (as 'Si Tu Tienes Corazon'). The most recent recording (as far as this writer can ascertain) is by Kathy Kirby, the popular UK entertainer and blonde bombshell who, by July '72, hadn't had a hit for seven years. Her slick supper-club version spotlighted her still impressive tonsils and has aged well.



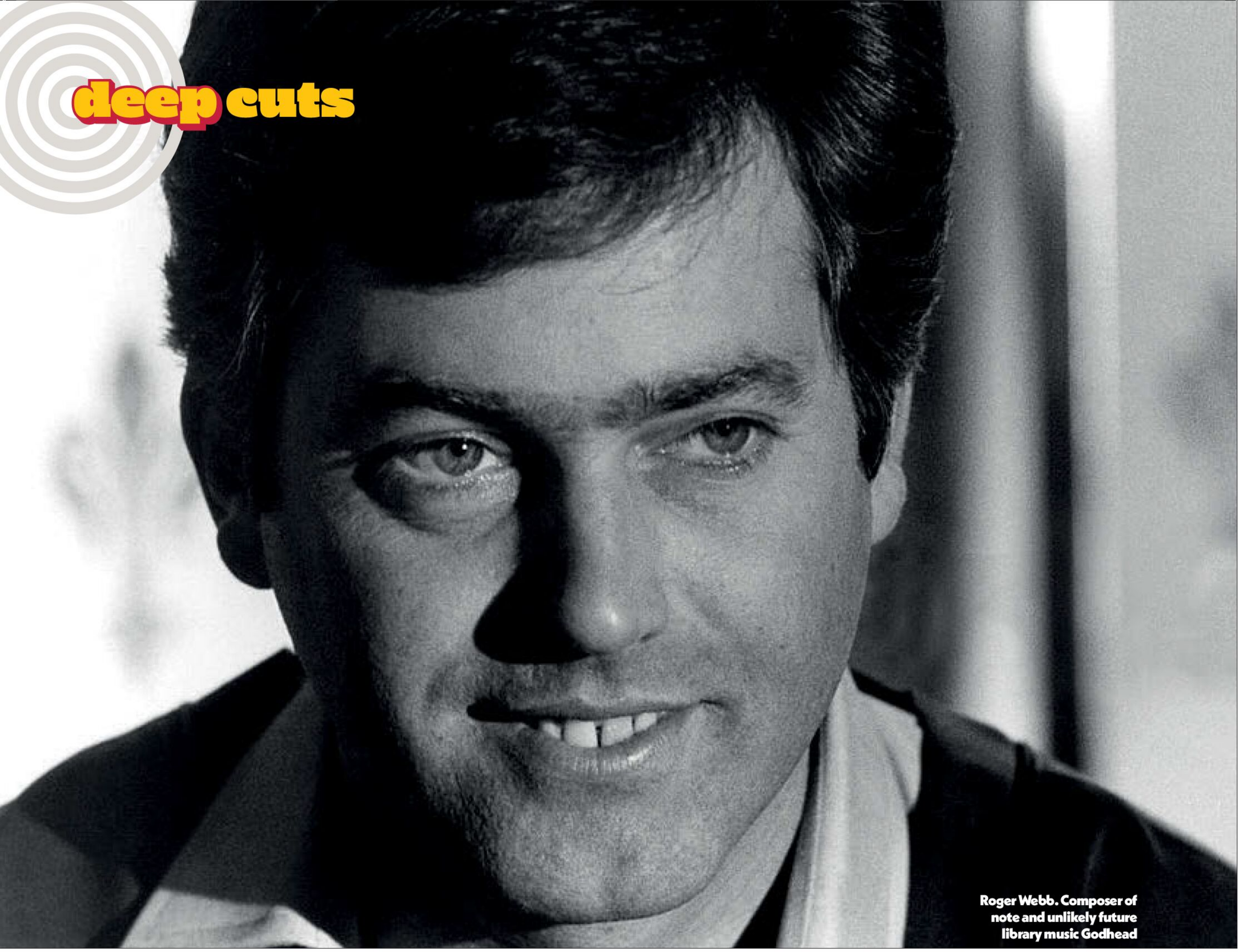


Williams A&M promo photo; his and a selection of other readings of 'Do You Really Have A Heart?'

"Nichols would write a melody that I'd like and then he'd lock me in the office and wouldn't let me out until I'd finished"
Paul Williams

Williams and Nichols' fully formed demo of 'Do You Really Have A Heart?', with Nichols handling most of the instrumental duties, snuck out on self-funded publishing demo album *We've Only Just Begun* in '70. Good luck finding a copy – even the 2012 Japanese CD reissue goes for £100 now.

"It was a long time ago when we made this record," Williams wrote for the liner notes to Ship To Shore's 2018 reissue, "but by God I'm still here. It was the beginnings of my career, the beginnings of a great relationship with Roger Nichols." And a great song, one whose themes of selflessness and isolation ring truer than ever today. S!



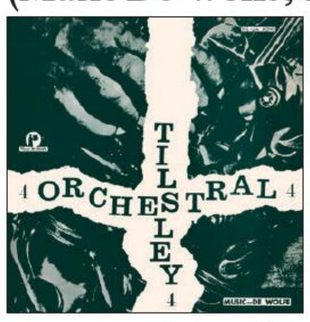
Roger Webb. Composer of note and unlikely future library music Godhead

Shades And Tones

Whether it's Italian synth-horror, French *avant*-jazz, German prog-funk or jolly UK TV advertising cues, the seemingly endless worlds of library music continue to offer something for almost every musical palette – at a price.

As three wallet-busting UK library Holy Grails are reissued for the first time, **ANDY MORTEN** surveys 10 covetable, eclectic titles that have so far evaded exhumation and remain largely unknown... or unaffordable

THE LONDON BIG SOUND
Tilsley Orchestral No 4
(Music De Wolfe, 1969)



Croydon-born Reg Tilsley remains something of an unsung hero in the British library stakes, despite his involvement in The London Studio Group with Basil Kirchin and a catalogue of around 15 albums for UK production companies in the '70s and '80s. His style is generally light, easy-going fare, despite album titles such as *Heavy Gray* and *Classical Colours*, with this 1969 outing as The London Big Sound – his first for De Wolfe – still a cheap entry point. That his work appears in settings as disparate as *Dawn Of The Dead* and *What's Good For The Goose*, as well as being sampled by rappers KRS-One and Drake, says it all.

CARNABY STREET POP ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR
The London Theme
(Carnaby, 1969)

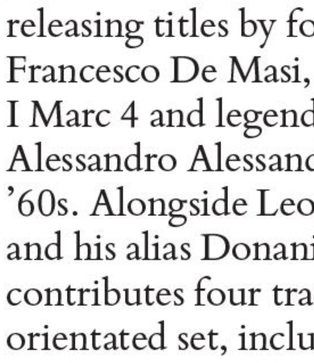
While several of its component parts have become mainstays of library compilations (particularly Blow Up's still essential *Exclusive Blend* series) this brassy Swinging London-themed cash-in for Mervyn Conn's short-lived Carnaby imprint has yet to be reissued in its entirety, a dubious '90s CD notwithstanding. The work of a powerhouse team of UK players – Keith Mansfield, Alan Hawkshaw, Alan Moorhouse – it saw release in territories as far afield as Argentina, Australia and

Brazil, where its opening track 'Dr Jeckle And Hyde Park' became the theme tune to nationally televised sports show *Esporte Espetacular*.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
I Solisti Dell'Unione Musicisti Di Roma
(SR, 1969)

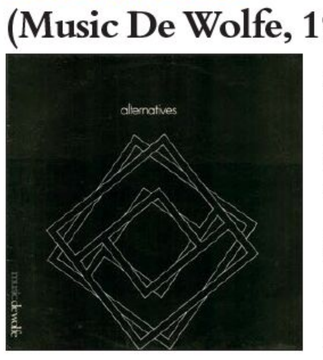
The record wing of Italian publisher Sermi Film Edizioni Musicali and film/TV production company Sermi Film, SR was ahead of the curve, releasing titles by former CAM giant Francesco De Masi, Italian Wrecking Crew I Marc 4 and legendary composer Alessandro Alessandroni in the mid to late '60s. Alongside Leopoldo Perez Bonsignore and his alias Donanin, Alessandroni contributes four tracks to this jazz-orientated set, including the self-explanatory and hugely enjoyable 'Jazz A Calcutta'. The album boasts the influential sleeve design unique to SR's six-record Intermezzi series.

THE LEMON DIPS
Who's Gonna Buy?
(Music De Wolfe, 1969)



De Wolfe was possible the first British library to latch onto the idea of making rock records as more filmmakers co-opted "heavy" music in a bid to attract the nation's youth. Unlike The Cool's *Pop Sounds*, Soft Slipper's *Sing Me A Song*, Sweet Chariot's *Sweet Chariot & Friends* and the four Electric Banana albums, *Who's Gonna Buy?* appears to be the work of session bods. Led by bassist/composer Johnny Hawksworth, the Dips gleefully – and skilfully – send up the progressive pop sounds of the day. Just six tracks but instrumental versions occupy Side Two.

ALAN PARKER & ALAN HAWKSHAW
Alternatives
(Music De Wolfe, 1971)



Alans Parker and Hawkshaw need little introduction here. Their DNA can be found across the KPM and De Wolfe libraries as well as scores or rock and pop tunes. Their sole joint entry is this low-key gem billed as "modern small group featuring variety of woodwind, keyboard and guitar", housed in an attractive sleeve designed by De Wolfe regular Rolph Webster and released in one of the company's most prolific and rewarding years. It's the autumnal, melancholic pieces like 'Lady Grey', 'Allison' and the impossibly evocative 'Moon Shade' (selected as the closing track of 2017's evergreen *English Weather* comp) that elevate *Alternatives* above the glut of stylistically diverse De Wolfe titles of the era.

"You wanna hear the Ondes Marthenot battling it out with a flute over a pounding psych-rock freak-out? Look no further"

OSCAR LINDOK'S ORCHESTRA
The Rhythm Of Life
(CAM, 1972)

Lindok was a pseudonym of Pietro Giacomo Dell'Orso (older brother of producer, composer and conductor Gianni – husband of vocalist Edda). Assisted by Gianni and Domenico Colarossi (here billed as Donimak) and an uncredited band/team rumoured to include Alessandro Alessandroni and Stefano Torossi, this 1972 oddity lunges from one period touchstone – B-movie psych-rock, pastoral jazz, worldless wandering, medieval flutes – to another with thrilling abandon. Expert musicianship, evocative orchestration and even the odd bit of phasing make this one for the connoisseurs.

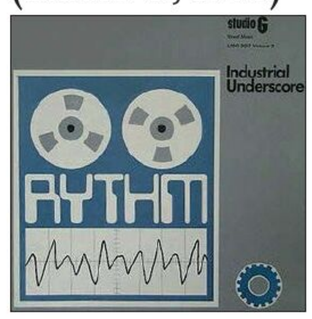
ROGER WEBB
Free As Air
(Music De Wolfe, 1972)

Pianist Webb's name has become synonymous with the kind of warm, mellow, gossamer-light jazz that's made the two Roger Webb Sound albums and recently unearthed *Bartleby* and *Shadows Of Fear* soundtracks so covetable. *Free As Air* bears all the sonic hallmarks of its predecessors (acoustic guitar, upright bass, flute, violin, percussion) but dials down the "book your next holiday with us today!" element somewhat. Utilises another eye-catching Nick Bantock cover design (see also Nick Ingman's *Big Beat*, Merrick & Warren's *Mindbender* and dozens of others).

THE YAN TREGGER GROUP
The Pop World Of Yan Tregger
(L'Illustration Musicale, 1972)

French/Algerian/Italian Edouard Joseph Scotto Di Suoccio seemingly tried his hand in every musical field, recording chanson singles, jazz-funk and disco albums and film soundtracks under a bewildering variety of aliases. He provided work for Italian company CAM and French libraries including Marignan, Edition Montparnasse 2000 and L'Illustration Musicale, for whom he cut this B-movie-style outing as The Yan Tregger Group, reportedly playing most of the instruments himself. You wanna hear the Ondes Marthenot battling it out with a flute over a pounding psych-rock freak-out? Look no further.

DOUGLAS WOOD
Rythm: Industrial Underscore Volume 3
(Studio G, 1976)



Occupying a singular spot between the organic group sounds of yore ('Factory Life') and a futuristic horizon where synths and electronics reign supreme ('Icicles'), *Rhythm (sic)* is consistently impressive and eminently playable, despite comprising of 20 short, unconnected cues. Head straight for 'Folk Ghost' (even that title screams, "Listen to me!"). Wood recorded this and one other album for the collectable Studio G label (see Trunk's *G-Spots* sampler) and the US Emil Ascher Library before becoming David McAllister for 11 (count 'em) albums on his own Omnimusic library/label in 1978-79.

ALAN TEW
Drama Suite Part I
(Themes International Music, 1976)

Alan Tew had more backroom pedigree than most of his Brit library contemporaries, having written and arranged countless pop and easy-listening sides through the '60s and '70s. Those skills are evident across the 28 cues here (and a further 33 on *Part II*), which sound like the blueprint for every cop drama of the decade: funky wah, pounding drums, stabbing brass, frantic bongos and the obligatory sexy comedowns that follow. "Dramatic action-packed theme, background and links," as the handy description has it. *SHAFT* meets *The Sweeney*, with *The Two Ronnies* and *The People's Court* somehow emerging from the smoke. S!

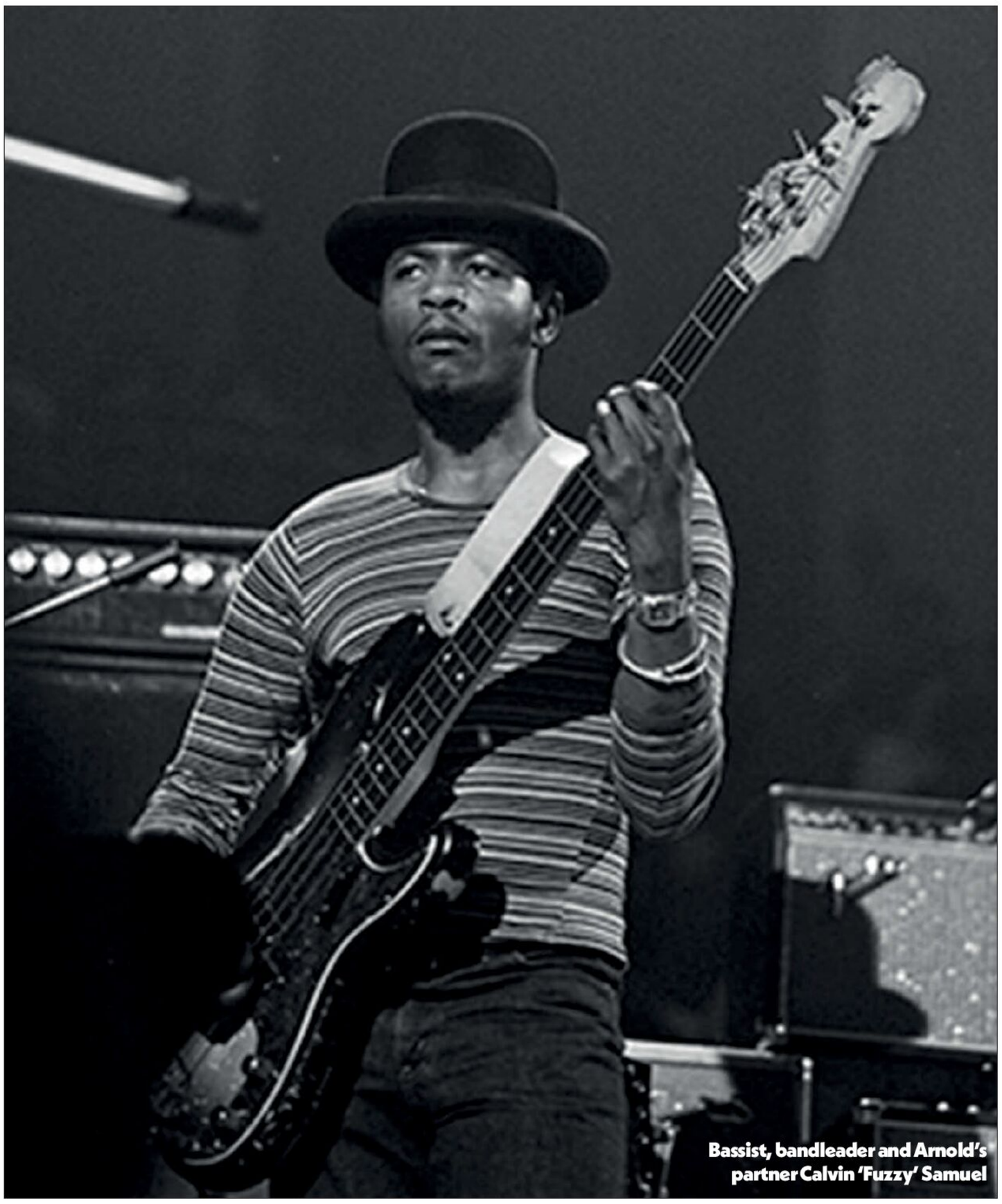
Barbara Moore's Vocal Shades And Tones, The Roger Webb Sound's Moonshade and Vecchio's Afro-Rock are out now on Be With

Axed

PP ARNOLD's newly minted funk-rock band Axis appeared to be set for big things in 1974. But egos, weed and a lack of discipline or solid material put a sudden end to that. The soul diva remembers one of her less memorable years

At the EMI offices in London, we met Roy Featherstone, then head of A&R, and quickly signed. Our advance was £10,000; it sounded like a lot of money at the time considering we'd only played them a couple of demos, but it was relatively small in comparison to some of the deals being done at the time. However, it was my first ever advance. I felt happy and validated. I like to think that Fuzz [Arnold's partner and bassist Calvin 'Fuzzy' Samuel] playing with CSNY, as well as my "PP Arnold" brand credibility, had helped to secure the deal, but in the end it's down to who you know. You're in luck if you have a manager or lawyer or who's already in with the label. And we were in luck. Now we just had to deliver.

We called our band Axis in tribute to Jimi Hendrix. I was putting all my faith in Fuzz's production ideas – though, truth be told, I really had no proof of his abilities yet. For the musicians, we assembled our friend Wendell on guitar, plus Robert Bailey from Osibisa on keyboards, drummer Alan White (who was managed by Tony) and percussionist Gaspar Lawal. Fuzz would play bass and I would sing. The record was going to be built around



Bassist, bandleader and Arnold's partner Calvin 'Fuzzy' Samuel

"When we began recording, the musicians we'd assembled didn't get any musical direction from Fuzz. There were no rehearsals, and the songs were all being worked out in the studio. All the experimental ideas seemed horribly underdeveloped"

songs Fuzz and I had written and then we'd put a touring band together. Tony had booked us in at Advision Studios and Eddie Offord would engineer.

When we began recording, the musicians we'd assembled didn't get any musical direction from Fuzz. There were no rehearsals, and the songs were all being worked out in the studio. All the experimental ideas seemed horribly underdeveloped. Sometimes songs were recorded in the wrong key for me, and I sounded terrible. Too often, the direction certain ideas were being taken was a surprise to me and I never had enough time to find the right style to sing them in. Time was of the essence, too; we had a limited production budget and were on the clock. I tried to reason with Fuzz, but he wouldn't listen.

A lot of marijuana was being smoked and everybody thought – surprise, surprise! – that everything sounded great. It didn't. We recorded five tracks at Advision, but they were all just long self-indulgent jams. The vocals were a mess. The band overpowered the melodies, and the hooks were boring and repetitive. I thought that Fuzz was more concerned with how the backing sounded than the vocals, but I didn't want to make a scene. I was the only woman in the studio and I had no production skills. Had I been the bitch they all believed I was, I might have been able to salvage something. The intimacy of the original demos was long lost and Fuzz was stubbornly, irresponsibly taking us down the wrong road.

The legendary blues producer Mike Vernon owned a studio near us, in Chipping Norton, and I had sung backing vocals for him on the brilliant title track of Freddie King's album *The Burglar*, alongside another American singer, Misty Browning. Mike's studio was great and Fuzz decided to do the next sessions there, as it was less expensive and much closer to home. Any savings we may have made, however, were soon swallowed up by a litany of supporting musicians that Fuzz flew in from all around the world.

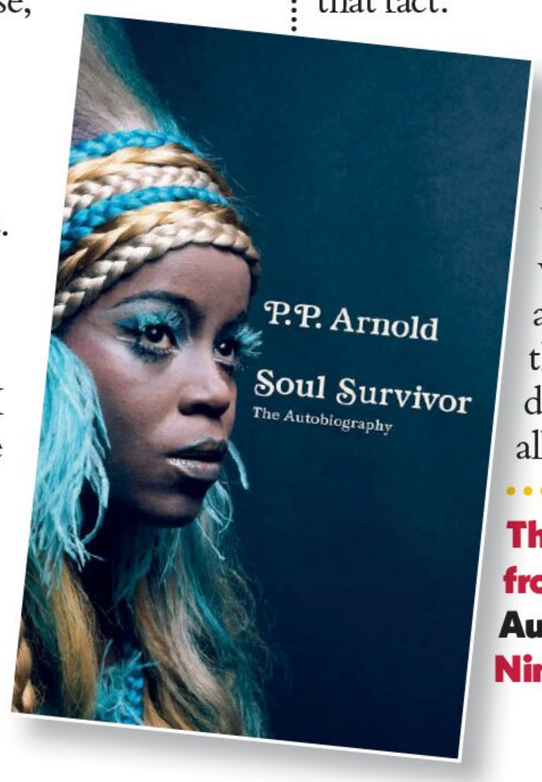
Kevin and Debbie and some other Milton children sang on one nice track, 'Hello Sunshine'. They all enjoyed their day in the studio but sadly these sessions were no better organised than before and the other songs just weren't working. The words I was singing might have meant something to Fuzz, but I just couldn't find my way in. They had no real melodic structure and there was no beauty in the arrangements. The wrong keys forced strained vocals and the painful ad libs sounded excruciating. I complained, but it made no difference. I sounded like shit. A song called 'Soulful' wasn't even in the same postal district as soul. We were totally lost in his own one-man Hot-Lick Syndrome. I couldn't recognise the PP Arnold who had sung on those beautiful '60s productions.

Everyone else was having a good time, but all the marijuana was having the opposite effect on my brain. I was smiling and laughing on the outside, but I was dying inside. I had given up my power and had no idea how to turn things around.

I had allowed my PP Arnold persona to become lost in the Axis band concept.

If the music we'd made had been on fire, it would have been accepted. Sometimes people just don't get it, I understand that, but on this occasion the honest reason was that the music was just not good enough. I was trying to do something outside the box but nobody wanted to hear that. I was a pop singer and I should have recorded material that reflected that fact.

It turned out that Fuzz had been mixing tracks at the Manor with his club house pals all along. Far from being a liberated woman, I was trapped in a professional and personal relationship that would end up being my downfall. Subsumed, I had lost all sight of who I was. S!



This is an abridged extract from Soul Survivor: The Autobiography published by Nine Eight

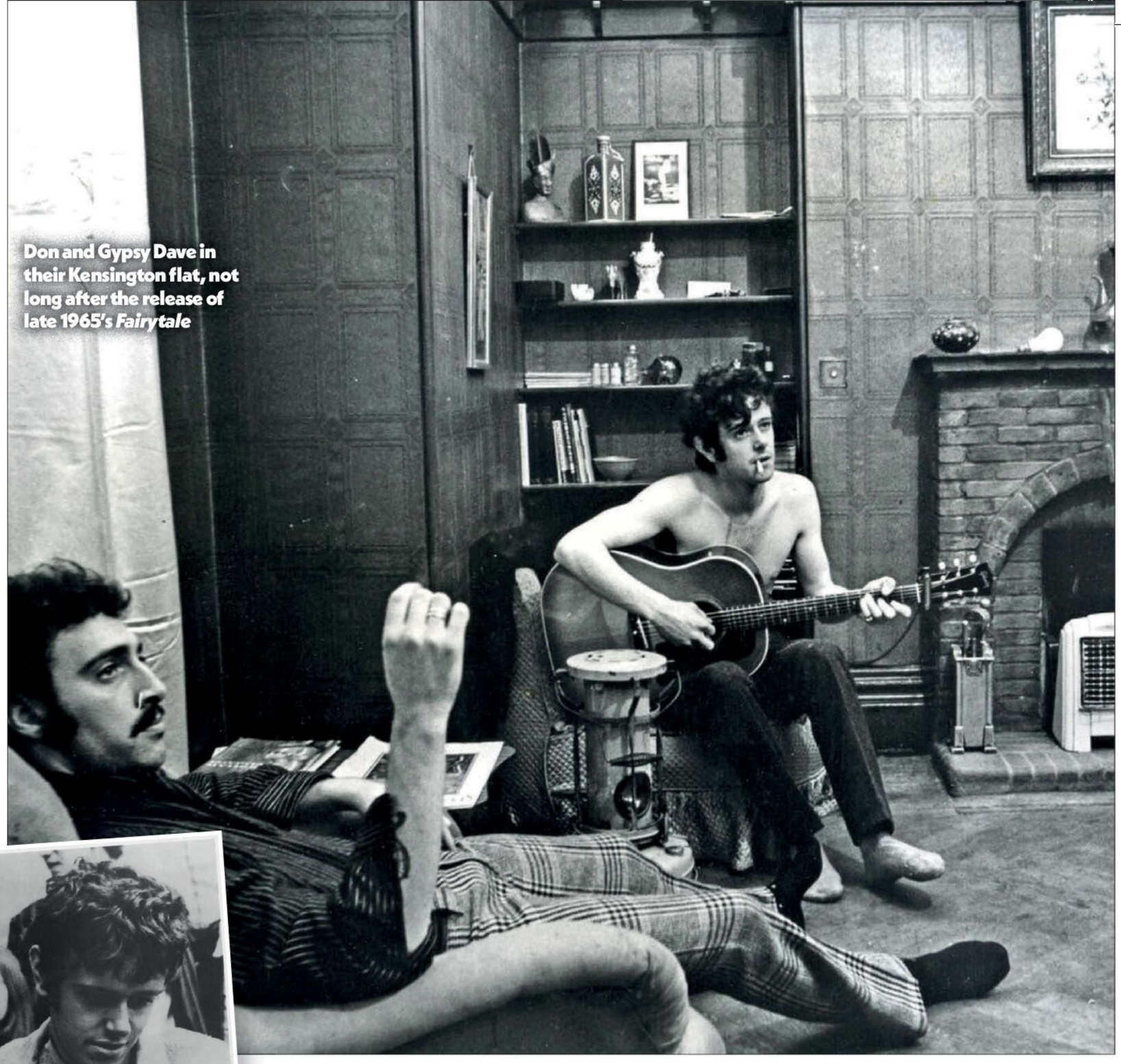
20 questions

"We thought we were gonna go to art school, but we picked up the guitar. In 1966 that revolution came to a head and exploded everywhere." Donovan burns bright in '67

Happiness Runs

DONOVAN needs no introduction in these pages. For approaching 60 years he has written songs of truth and wisdom that have registered with subsequent generations, while espousing a bohemian vendetta and artistic revolution.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS hears how the artist grew and developed into one of the most important voices of the '60s and '70s, and his renaissance and relevance in 2023



Don and Gypsy Dave in their Kensington flat, not long after the release of late 1965's *Fairytale*

Shindig!: Arriving in southern England as rock 'n' roll hit, was Hatfield a culture shock or somewhere to which you happily adapted? What musical trends and styles first fascinated you?

Donovan: Arriving in Southern England, as the story of rock 'n' roll on the airwaves began, and soon television, was extraordinary. I'd come from 10 years living in Glasgow and I was very much influenced by the music of my Scots and Irish background. People still sang the Irish and Scottish folk songs at home in Glasgow in the late '40s and early '50s. I listened tremendously, overhearing my father's jazz collection. So, I was already prepared.

A lot of other people left the north to come and live in the new towns. When I arrived, I was about 10, so I was completely overwhelmed by the new music that was trying to get on the radio. The BBC wouldn't play it. Radio Luxembourg would. My ear was to my pillow late at night listening to the new popular music. I was a bit young for Elvis, so it was Buddy Holly and The Everly Brothers for me. But I think you're more interested in what musical trends and styles fascinated me as I was plunged into college, which was still near Hartfield.

There I was in St Albans, which of course is an ancient town. That was my nearest bohemian enclave. I was very much involved in reading books in the college about the new revolution of thought that was pouring through America, but also was happening in Britain, and had had been happening in Britain for some time. St Albans had the art school, it had the coffee bar, it had the jazz club, and very soon it would have a rhythm 'n' blues club. These trends were very fascinating for me. There was the pub called The Cock Inn – an unfortunate title, when you think about it. For young people of college age to hang out in the back room of the pub there, guitars bashing, young girls sitting there smoking their rolled-up cigarettes and half pints of bitter, it was a scene. This was incredible for me.

S!: We've spoken with Wizz Jones, Ralph McTell and Hawkwind's Dave Brock about hitching across the continent and UK as beatniks. What are your fondest memories of this era, and how important do you deem it for all that followed?

D: My father was well read. Lots of Scots and Irish were very well read. He read the poems of a wandering poet called Robert W Service and WH Davies. So I was filled with this longing to move away. The Scots and the Irish have always moved away. There was much immigration into America, as you know. More importantly in college, that extraordinary book by Jack Kerouac, *On The Road*, was my major catalyst. He was Gaelic in background, from Brittany in Northern West France. And he appealed to me. That story also spoke of hitchhiking. Gypsy Dave and I took note. We looked at society and said, "Society's sick, right? Two world wars, a depression, and a nuclear bomb. Are these the thoughts and acts of the most advanced species on the planet?" We knew we were now part of a revolutionary state of mind sweeping through the student world. I had a guitar by then and Gypsy said we should hitchhike away. "We're not joining society." We took the A4, the road to the Southwest. St Ives, Cornwall was where all the bohemian students in their summer recess would find themselves. We hitchhiked down that long road down to Cornwall and spent a glorious bohemian summer sleeping on the beaches, or in a wood land hut that Gypsy built.

I got a job in The Harbour Hotel bar to get some money to buy some guitar strings. Gypsy said to me, "Look, The Cops & Robbers of Watford are playing in Southend-On-Sea. You hitch up back there after the summer is over, and I'm gonna chase my beautiful girlfriend Lorna, who's gone back to Manchester. I have to go and see her." I hitched up to the R&B club and played three songs in the break. Jeff Stevens, a songwriter, and a maker of music working for Southern Music in Denmark Street, walked up to me, and said, "How would you think about coming up to London and making some demos?"

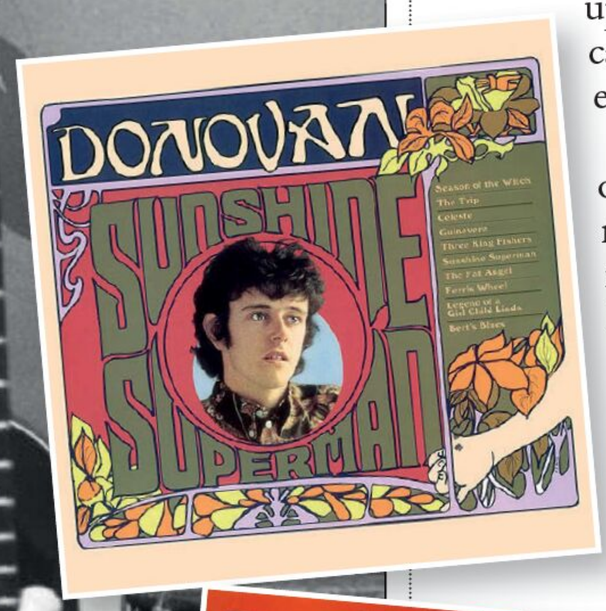
S!: To what extent were you influenced by Scottish poetry and lore, and how did it (and the lyrical sounds of the spoken word) affect the choice of words in your lyrics?

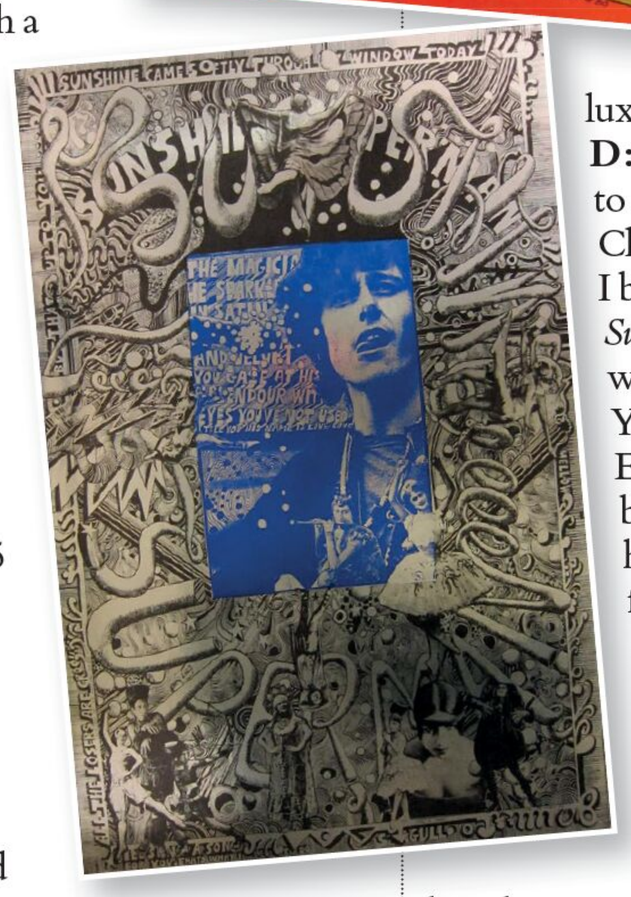
D: It was in the tradition. Glasgow, Dublin, Belfast and Liverpool were very influenced by the Gaelic culture. Because there was no work in Ireland and Scotland, Liverpool and Belfast got inundated with Gaelic culture. We call it Celtic now, but it's older. And with that came an incredible tradition of poetry, music, theatre, and the spoken word. If you look very closely, you'll see quite a lot of Irish, Scots and Welsh last names in popular music from the mid-60s on.

S!: *Fairytale* is a brilliantly ambitious album with a few songs showing a new approach, notably the jazzy 'Sunny Goodge Street', and both 'Summer Day Reflection Song' and 'Jersey Thursday' hinting at folk while anticipating British psychedelia. You were also way ahead with the mention of magicians and fairytales. What was inspiring you at this time?

D: The history and tradition of the folk element of Scotland, Ireland and the poetic Welsh tradition, they were very evident in my work, because I come from the tradition. It was a great wish and a great mission of the American poet to bring poetry back to popular culture, but it would be up to us, the Irish, Scots and the Welsh to use the four-line folk tradition of Gaelic songwriting that would bring in these new thoughts and new ideas. On the *Fairytale* album I experimented mixing classical, jazz and folk. That was completely outrageous, because when a new movement arrives it usually is in contradiction to a movement that is well established.

The folk press was up in arms when I did *Fairytale*, and they were up in arms when I had a pop single called 'Catch The Wind' in the chart at #4, because they felt





Embracing the trappings of pop star fame, 1966; that year's US-only *Sunshine Superman* album; '67 posters

that the chart was full of bad, weak, stupid, backward music. They looked at folk music as something sacrosanct, something sacred. Donovan was a traitor, bringing a folk star sound into a pop chart. But that was the idea. Gypsy said, "If we don't approach the millions of young people in the baby boom that really are only reading the backs of cereal boxes and comic books, we won't get them reading other books and looking at this revolution, it won't happen."

In 'Sunny Goodge Street', in 12 lines, I outlined the whole revolution that was happening in student flats all over Western Europe, and soon all over America. The student in the cheap flats with the electric bulb swinging in the ceiling and a wooden guitar. I was a chronicler, I was a biographer about all these things, but mixing music together in different blends was shocking to the ones that wanted only jazz, only pop, only folk, only classical. So yeah, you can give me that. That's what I did. I opened the door, opened the window, and it wasn't long after that the folk musicians were plugging in their banjos and guitars.

***S!*:** Nineteen-Sixty-Six was a pivotal year for you and pop music in general. What are your abiding memories of you and your contemporaries' recordings during this rapidly changing time? As an aside, in 2021 you released 'Season Of The Witch 2', a new recording of your '66 track. What made you revisit this at such a tumultuous time?

D: It all really started in 1965 when *Ready, Steady, Go* ruled. That was the breakthrough. They were broadcasting right into homes what was going on with these young bands. The revolution in '65 was extraordinary, but when it hit in '66, it went from black & white to full colour. The art students and the writers, the poets and the dancers, the singers and the filmmakers, and the actors and the actresses were all now able to project themselves forward with the new media. I met my producer Mickie Most then too, and he brought me a new form of freedom in the studio. John Cameron joined and was a complete musical maestro.

This experimentation was happening with The Beatles, Kinks, Who, Hollies, the recording studio was becoming our palette, our art school of emotional sound and story. Poetry invaded popular culture and the art world. We were all wanting to be artists. John Lennon, Ray Davies, Paul McCartney, me, and many others, we won. We thought we were gonna go to art school, but we picked up the guitar. In '66 that revolution came to a head and exploded everywhere.

'Season Of The Witch' speaks of a dark angst of this huge revolution that was happening in the mid-20th century and is happening more than ever now – the destruction of Mother Earth. I recently suggested that we should do one more version. There were two reasons for that. I knew that Sony would ask for too much money for the use of the masters in movies. So, we started to re-record some of the songs.

***S!*:** You were extremely prolific in the recording studio in 1967. Was that one of the factors in deciding to split *A Gift From A Flower To A Garden* into two stylistically separate halves – and what did you think about it being split into two albums – *Wear Your Love Like Heaven* and *For Little Ones* – in the US? Was there much opposition from Pye Records to the luxurious and costly packaging?

D: It was very difficult to present it to the super boss of Epic Records, Clive Davis. Clive Davis and I began working together on *Sunshine Superman*. Sid Maurer was a great designer in New York who did all the covers for Epic Records. He was an old bohemian artist himself. When he saw what I wanted to do for *A Gift*… he said, "This is revolutionary, and you're gonna blow the record company away." So we went in to meet Clive, and he presented it as a box set. And Clive looked and said, "Pop singers don't have box sets. Classical artists have boxes, jazz musicians have boxes, and sometimes folk singers have box sets, but we don't do that in pop music." Sid looked at Clive, who he knew very well from the music world, and said, "Yeah, but you should do this. This is really going to be a revolutionary and a brand-new thing for the label." Clive then got the heebie-jeebies; he got a little bit concerned. He said, "Look, let's release it as two single albums and see what happens. And then after Christmas, we definitely will make it into the box you want with all the fine papers and all the wonderful parts." Sid was happy about

that. But Clive said, "You have to pay for all the costs of making such an extraordinary thing." Because as you know, Jon, in pop music it really was two pieces of cardboard stuck together with a vinyl album in between and four guys in the same suits jumping up and down on a roof for the photograph. The packaging of popular music was as simple as that. The music was sold that way. Doing it with a box set was the way I wanted to do it. My fans were so supportive that I wanted to present art and the real tactile feeling of a box with fine art paper and all the things that they should have to collect, like a wonderful work of art. It finally was released as two single albums before Christmas, and they didn't do anything. One went to over 100, one went to 98 or something. It wasn't a success, but as soon as it was released in January of the next year, it went gold. The package was accepted.

***S!*:** This album, and actually, a lot of what went before, is often quoted as being one of the foundation stones of the acid-folk phenomenon that followed. Does that make any sense to you now? If so, who did you or do you consider as peers?
D: As you might have noticed in the world of art, when an artist suddenly leaps out of Bohemia, we don't stay long in Bohemia, we were immediately presented to and accepted by millions of people around the world. Then everything that would come to me to inspire me – I wouldn't be listening to anybody else – came from the world of jazz, baroque, folk, classical Indian music, Japanese music, and many other styles from around the world. I would absorb, and they would suggest themselves to me. But I was not really following any peers. I guess I got the ball roilling.

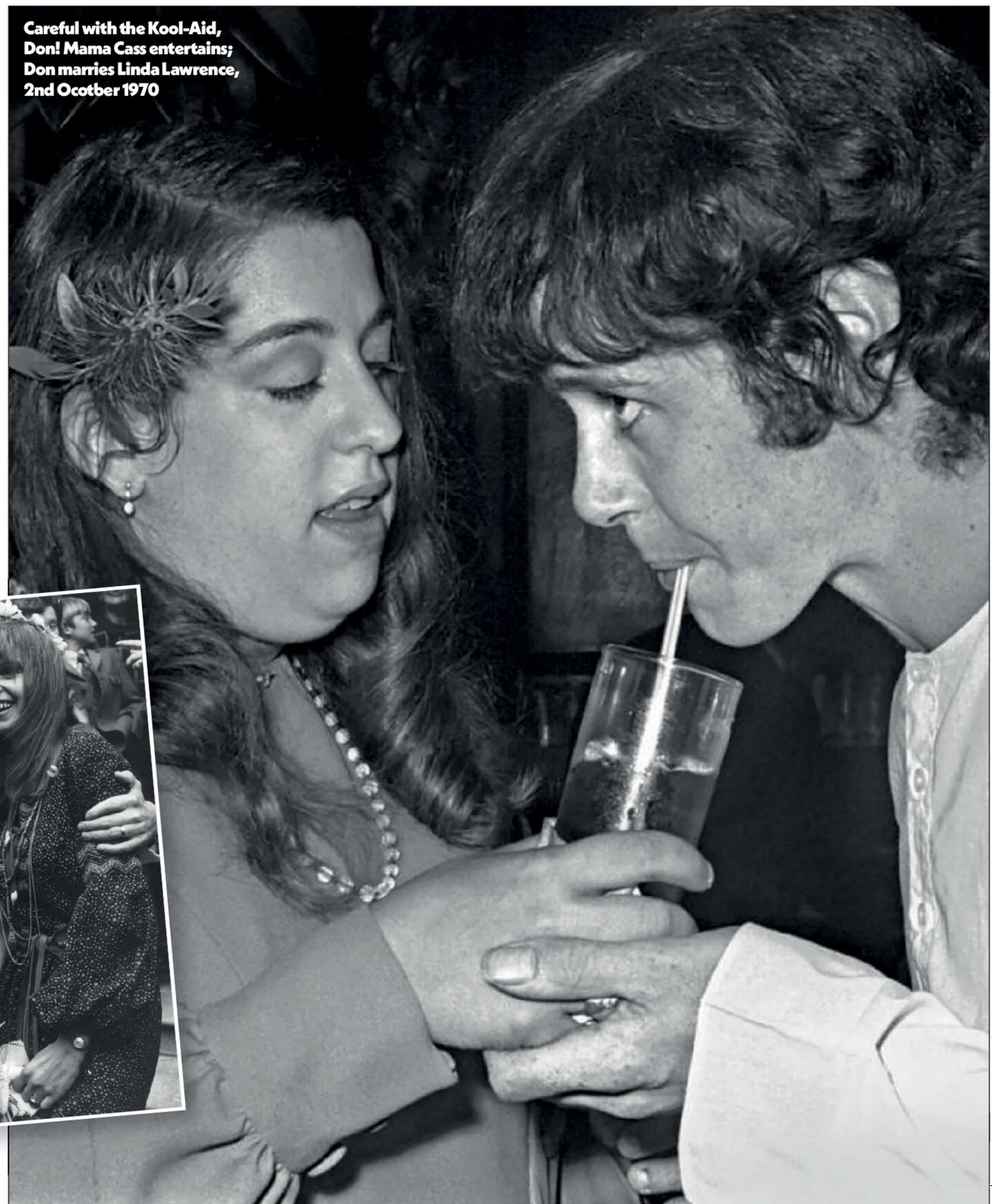
***S!*:** How did you first encounter Mike and Robin of The Incredible String Band?
D: They came out of the same Gaelic background of the tradition; of music, of poetry, theatre. I bought their album and liked it a lot. I was following them, but I was not trying to copy anything from them because we were coming from the same place. The whole idea of the album being accepted in a psychedelic way and a magical way was from the exploration of altered states of consciousness.

***S!*:** You name checked Jefferson Airplane in 'The Fat Angel', but were there any other bands (Fabs aside) that you regarded as particularly noteworthy? What did you think of, for example, Syd's Pink Floyd?
D: Well, it's very simple. We have spoken of the bohemian centres, and the other two great ones in the new country called America was New York and San Francisco. San Francisco attracted my attention because it was a bohemian enclave that had been building slowly from the '40s and the '50s to become very important. Just like Paris was in the late 1800s, it was a magnet. Not because of the climate only, but because there was a freedom. The film world and the music world kind of congregated in Southern California. In San Francisco, which was more traditional Bohemia, I was attracted to what was happening there with The Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane. When I went over there, I made a point to say, "Hello." Putting Jefferson Airplane and Mama Cass, The Fat Angel, into the song was tipping my hat to the bohemian music revolution over there.

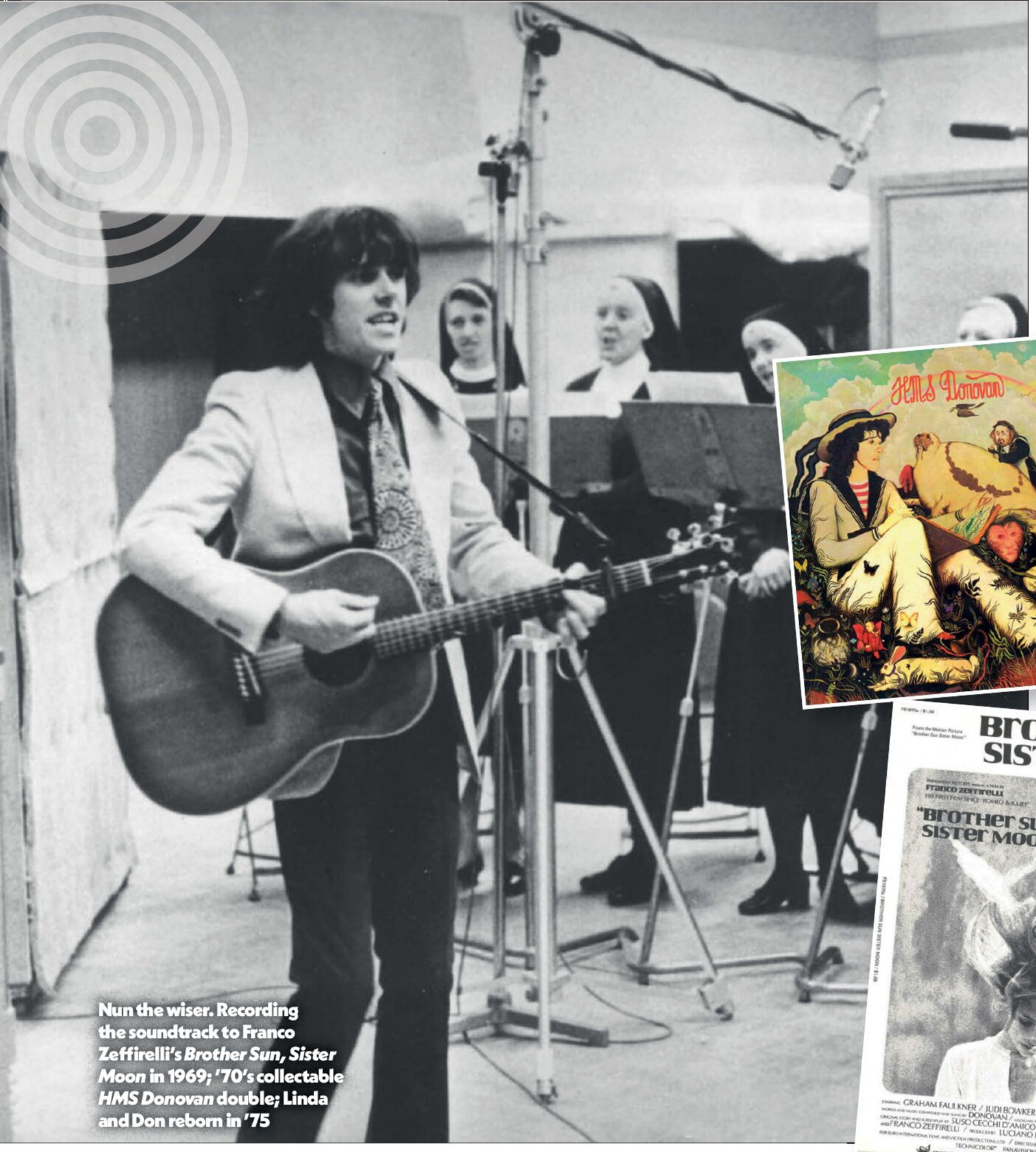
David Gilmour said to me that Syd listened to 'Three King Fishers' from *Sunshine Superman*, and he felt that that was the direction he wanted to go in. The whole idea when I was breaking the rules, was to say to the other guys, you can also break the rules too. You can go forward into many different areas. Floyd's direction was encouraged by the *Superman* album and the boldness of what Gypsy Dave and Donovan were doing in the studio.

***S!*:** You had already worked with Ken Loach on *Poor Cow*. Your song works amazingly well there. You were then invited by Franco Zeffirelli to compose the music for *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*. Is there any chance the

"In pop music it really was two pieces of cardboard stuck together with a vinyl album in between and four guys in the same suits jumping up and down on a roof for the photograph. The packaging of popular music was as simple as that"



Careful with the Kool-Aid, Don! Mama Cass entertains; Don marries Linda Lawrence, 2nd Ocotber 1970



Nun the wiser. Recording the soundtrack to Franco Zeffirelli's *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* in 1969; '70's collectable *HMS Donovan* double; Linda and Don reborn in '75

"After the '60s came to a numerical end, it had occurred to Gypsy and I that the mission had been accomplished. What we had wished to do was invade popular culture with revolutionary ideas. And it had been done. What else was there to do?"

original soundtrack recordings will ever be released?

D: Franco Zeffirelli was from the world of opera. When he made his films, he didn't have much knowledge of the need to release a soundtrack album. When we left the studio after the english version had been recorded, I explained that I needed to take away the tapes for the soundtrack album. He said, "Oh no, we'll just leave that on the film." And I said, "But we need the soundtrack released." And he said, "No, your fans will go and see the film." Then after that, a terrible thing happened because the people that were releasing the film said, "This is the story of St Francis. We need an Italian version." Riz Ortolani was given the job, and it was a big job, to make the soundtrack all over again, with the songs sung in Italian, and the actors speaking in it. It was a mess, but they wanted to do it. And until this day, the story from The Zeffirelli Foundation in Florence, which I'm working with, was that Franco never liked the Italian one, and always loved the Donovan version. It's the 50th anniversary of the *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* being released in the UK and we've been working to get the original film to reprocess it for re-release. We're hoping for it to be presented in Italy with the Donovan version before Christmas. And right now, the whole idea is to re-release the proper soundtrack too.

***S!*:** You inspired Vashti Bunyan to travel via horse and cart from London to your land in the Hebrides – a trip during which she wrote many of the songs that ended up on her album *Just Another Diamond Day*. How did you meet her, and did you hear the songs before she recorded them?

D: In Bohemia there are young men and women from good families that don't want to go the way of their upper-class parents. And often they loved horses. And often they went on the road. Maybe Vashti was part of that group. I heard that when I was away from my cottage, a gypsy caravan arrived with horses and a young artist, whose name was Vashti. She went to Scotland to try and find me, and we missed each other then. So really, it was a distant relationship. We weren't really together in any way, but we were in the music world. She was an extraordinary young woman and still is. She followed her dream. And that was so important. I didn't hear the songs, but many, many young artists have said that my work encouraged them, enthused them, and then influenced them. I'm part of her work, which I'm very happy about. Finally, we met, many years later. And I said, "Well done, gal. You did it."

***S!*:** *HMS Donovan* is the most collectable Donovan album and a record that's gaining appreciation. Where were you coming from with this after the equally great *Open Road?*

D: Those were the days when I went back on the road. I continued recording in Morgan Studios and out of those sessions, what I would call just me and the acoustic guitar, no band, well, some congas and bongos maybe, came *HMS*. That was a record returning to the vocal and the acoustic guitar, and the tradition of the minstrel, the troubadour, the bard, the ancient tradition of Scotland, Wales and Ireland. You might call it folk, but I call it tradition. Many of the songs were for children. After the '60s incredible success, it was important for me. To disappear into the studio and do something was extraordinarily positive.

***S!*:** You made an excellent string of albums in the early '70s, particularly *Cosmic Wheels* and the brilliant *7 Tease*. You worked with Andrew Oldham on *Essence To Essence* with a coterie of amazing musicians. How did you find this period of your career after '60s pop stardom?

D: As said, the mission was complete. The energy was low, but the power in the studio was high. I attracted an incredible number of amazing musicians to play with me. My songs are fun to record, and they all knew that.

***S!*:** You contributed vocals to the title track of Alice Cooper's *Billion Dollar Babies* album.

What can you tell us about that session, or was it a classic case of "If you remember it, you weren't there"?

D: After the '60s came to a numerical end, it had occurred to Gypsy and I that the mission had been accomplished. What we had wished to do was invade popular culture with revolutionary ideas. And it had been done. What else was there to do? I then sat myself in Morgan Studios and started recording, and recording, and recording. In the '60s we were so busy. We would record an album in a week. In the '70s, we suddenly found ourselves being able to sit in a recording studio for weeks and develop credible things, because we didn't have to hustle to make another single, because the chart was telling us that our single was dropping. Those days had gone, and I was in Morgan Studios doing my stuff.

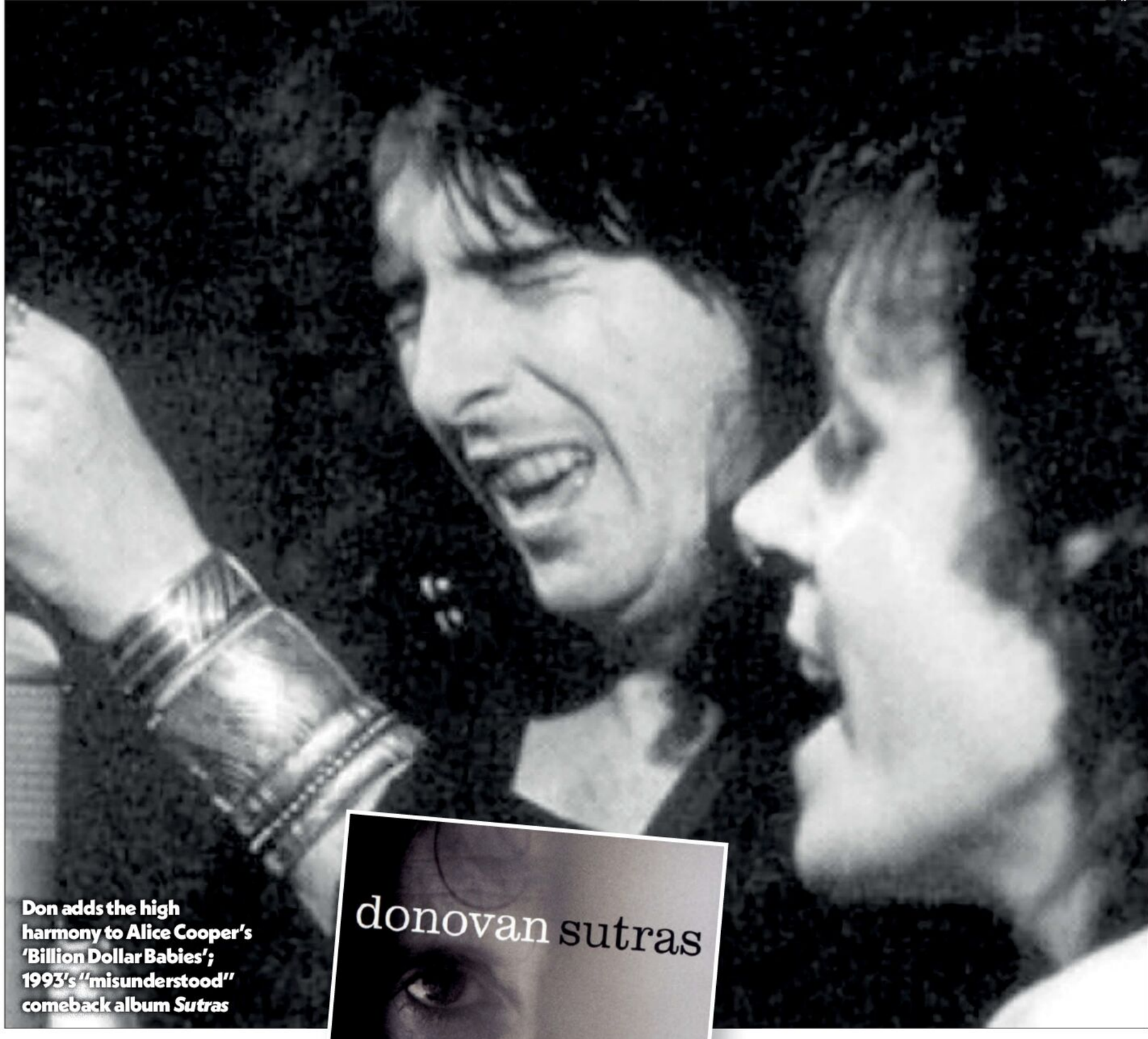
While we were making *Cosmic Wheels*, downstairs there was a band called Alice Cooper. While I was upstairs recording 'Intergalactic Laxative', which was way out there, I took a break and went down to see what was going on downstairs. Alice Cooper invited me in. I said, "What are you doing?" And he put the track on, and it was "power rock metal folk". He was telling a story. But it was power rock, there were no acoustic guitars. I said, "That's interesting. You are doing a spooky kind of horror thing. I did that too with 'Season Of The Witch'." He asked if I would like to put a vocal on. I said, "Look, let me sing on your chorus line. I'll jump into falsetto, then I'll be heard." A little while later, 'Billion Dollar Babies' was in the Top 30.

S!: You supported Yes in Glasgow in 1977, when punk was at its zenith. Did you feel threatened by punk, or rejuvenated by it, or neither? Did it have much impact on you at all?

D: I found it to be somewhat like The Theatre Of The Absurd, which was a movement in early last century Paris, designed to hold up art and the establishment as an imposture. It seemed to work, with Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren creating the costumes and the rhetoric.

S!: After 1993's misunderstood *Sutras*, *Beat Café* was your first album in nine years and marked something of a Donovan renaissance with major label back catalogue and many live shows focusing on your golden era. How did it feel to be so appreciated again?

D: The '60s were a time when constant releases were normal for all of us. By 1977 my albums had sung of the development of the many revolutionary movements we had begun. Jamaican music, ecology issues, meditation, astrology as a study of character, rather than future forecasting, were all burgeoning. My Linda [Lawrence, Donovan's wife and muse] is right when she says it usually takes 10 years or more for audiences to catch up with all the beneficial movements that we few are brave enough to present, against all the attacks by those who don't want to change for the better.



Don adds the high harmony to Alice Cooper's 'Billion Dollar Babies'; 1993's "misunderstood" comeback album *Sutras*

The *Sutras* and *Beat Café* albums explore the Inner Circle movements that encourage minority seekers of lost wisdom and reveal the roots of popular music. Always a teacher, I make albums like this most of the time.

Gaps in releases are not important for an artist like me. As to appreciation of one's work, great sales success and massive media coverage are not really the measurements of the worth of a true work of art. When *Sutras* was released, my mailbag was huge with many saying that they had gone to the kitchen and tossed out all the junk food and took up their meditation again. That is a real success for a poet to give audiences courage and assurance.

S!: These are dark and ugly times. Do you hold out hope for the world?

D: We ignore the warnings of Mother Nature at our peril.

S!: Your songs have been recovered by a bewildering array of artists, from Joan Baez to Lou Rawls to The Butthole Surfers. Do you have any favourite interpretations, and why?

D: All poet songwriters are pleased when others find their own journey reflected in one's poems. My all-time favourite, not a hit song, is Kate Bush singing my 'Lord Of The Reedy River'.

S!: You're very "hands on" when it comes to the repackaging of your classic '60s albums – and justifiably so. Have you enjoyed watching State51's reproduction of *A Gift From A Flower To A Garden?*

D: From album one I brought in bohemian artists to present the visual vibe of the music within. The 1967 beginning of the *Gift* package broke all the rules, and I was at first just intrigued that the small label S51 took it on. But when I met Daniel Mason of Something Else, and when I knew he had created other heritage box sets, I thought maybe this can happen. Then when I realised Daniel was born the same day as me, Taurus signs are if anything persistent and stubborn, I smiled knowing this can happen and gave my full support. The original art designer Sydney Randolph Maurer and I were closely studied by Daniel, and he researched what we did in detail. It's a new version, but just like the original. It's spooky really.

S!: We've heard tantalising things about further releases in 2024 containing rare and unreleased material. Anything you're able to let slip about that?

D: There are so many unreleased recordings, and the wonderful thing about me is that I don't, and can't, only make demos. They are all high-level recordings. Watch this space. S!

Contributors: Richard Allen, Peter Gallagher, Fiona McQuarrie, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Morten, Gitte Morten, Marco Rossi, Adrian Whittaker

A Gift From A Flower To A Garden is out now on The State51 Conspiracy. More releases will follow

The SHINDIG! Writers' Poll

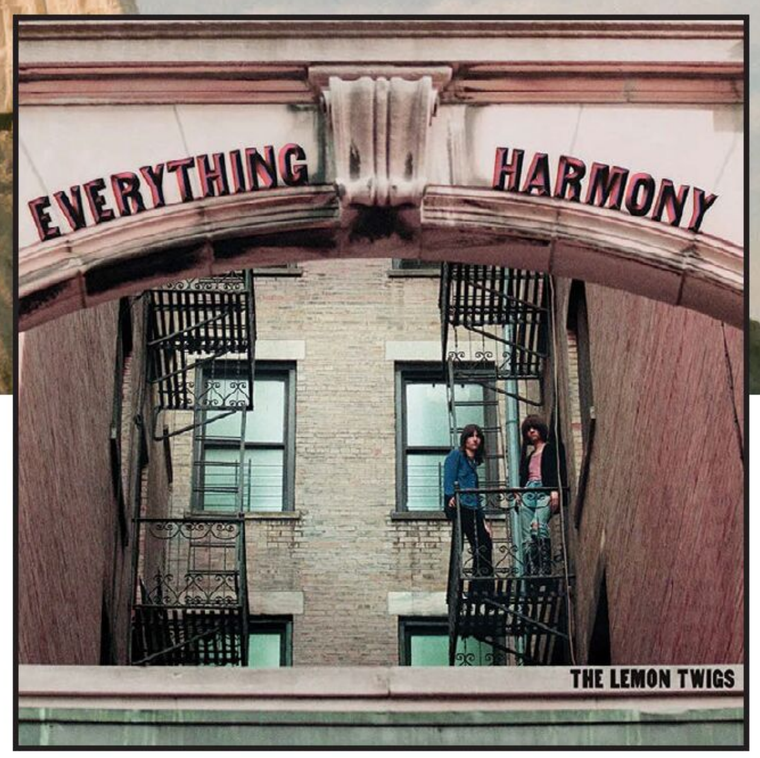
It can be a grim, dispiriting world out there but music, as always, remains our salvation, whether it's being made by an increasingly dazzling array of exciting new artists on boutique labels and in sweaty, beer-drenched clubs, or filling deluxe anniversary box sets by treasured heritage acts. We thrive on it all here at *Shindig!* as we continue to celebrate and chronicle the soundtrack of our lives in our monthly pages and online presence.

This year we bid fond farewells to far too many musical and artistic heroes, including Kingsize Taylor, Jeff Blackburn, Jeff Beck, Robbie and Tim Bachman, Larry Morris, David Crosby, Anthony 'Top' Topham, Tom Verlaine, Barrett Strong, Burt Bacharach, Chuck Jackson, Bruce Barthol, Steve Mackey, Wayne Shorter, David Lindley, Jerrold Laurence Samuels AKA Napoleon XIV, Jim Gordon, Clarence 'Fuzzy' Haskins, Mick Slattery, Ray Shulman, Seymour Stein, April Stevens, Mark Stewart, Harry Belafonte, Gordon Lightfoot, Linda Lewis, Rita Lee, Francis Monkman, Algy Ward, Pete Brown, Andy Rourke, Tina Turner, Astrud Gilberto, Tony McPhee, Mo Foster, Sam Cutler, Tony Bennett, Randy Meisner, John Gosling, David LaFlamme, Robbie Robertson, Sixto Rodriguez, Jerry Moss, Gary Wright, Roger Whittaker, Terry Kirkman, Rudolph Isley, Dwight Twilley, David McCallum, Jamie Reid, Jane Birkin, Cynthia Weil and Ahmad Jamal.

So please join us as our regular writers and contributors to offer you their picks of 2023.

Contributors: Camilla Aisa, Grahame Bent, Michael Björn, Christopher Budd, Seán Casey, Duncan Fletcher, Ben Graham, Sarah Gregory, Kate Hodges, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Morten, Chaim O'Brien Blumenthal, Thomas Patterson, Jeff Penczak, Ben Phillipson, Paul Ritchie, Martin Ruddock, Chris Twomey

New album



1. THE LEMON TWIGS • EVERYTHING HARMONY
(Captured Tracks)

What we said: "Anyone confused by any prior musical bombast should tune right back in here. *Everything Harmony* is a concise 13-track set showcasing the brothers as they stand in the here and now, their musical gifts ever expanding. The powerpop jewels of yore are still there; younger brother Michael bringing top-drawer skills on the Big Star-ish 'What You Were Doing', while 'In My Head' is both gorgeous and insidious. Elsewhere, 'What Happens To A Heart' is an absolute triumph led by brother Brian; a huge, cinematic wall-of-sound production with French horn, celeste and '70s Phil Spector drums that raises a heartfelt vocal performance to epic proportions."

The Lemon Twigs' Brian and Michael D'Addario: "Hey *Shindig!* Happy to hear that the writers' poll voted our record as best album. As fans of the magazine and many of the groups you cover, we consider it an honour. We took great care in the arranging and producing of these tracks and are always trying to improve with each album. Thanks very much for voting for us and we hope everyone has a Merry Crimble and a very happy holiday. Long live *Shindig!*"

2. **Spencer Cullum's Coin Collection – Spencer Cullum's Coin Collection 2** (Full Time Hobby)
3. **The Coral – Sea Of Mirrors** (Run On/Modern Sky)
4. **Say She She – Silver** (Karma Chief)
5. **Mapache – Swinging Stars** (Innovative Leisure)
6. **Large Plants – The Thorn** (Ghost Box)
7. **The Ironsides – Changing Light** (Colemine)
8. **Jonathan Wilson – Eat The Worm** (BMG)
9. **Belbury Poly – The Path** (Ghost Box)
10. **Meg Baird – Furling** (Drag City)
11. **Teenage Fanclub – Nothing Lasts Forever** (PeMa)
12. **The Clientele – I Am Not There Anymore** (Merge)
13. **Shana Cleveland – Manzanita** (Hardly Art)
14. **Thomas Walsh – The Rest Is History** (Curation)
15. **Julie Byrne – The Greater Wings** (Ghostly International)
16. **The Evening Sons – Tracks** (Curation)
17. **Emile – Spirit** (Heavy Psych Sounds)
18. **Co-Pilot – Rotate** (Dell'Orso)
19. **Novelty Island – Wallsend Weekend Television** (Nine x Nine)
20. **Uni Boys – Buy This Now!** (Curation)
21. **Emma Tricca – Aspirin Sun** (Bella Union)
22. **Simon Rowe – Everybody's Thinking** (Big Potato)
23. **Soft Hearted Scientists – Waltz Of The Weekend** (The Hip Replacement)
24. **Vanity Mirror – Puff** (We Are Busy Bodies)
25. **The Treasures Of Mexico – Burn The Jets** (Spinout Nuggets)
26. **Pete Molinari – Wondrous Afternoon** (Blind Faith)
27. **Lael Neale – Star Eaters Delight** (Sub Pop)

Cellarful Of Soul

PAUL RITCHIE reviews the year in soul

Whilst the reissue market appears to have slowed down for the second year running, 2023 has been a notable year for contemporary soul and funk acts. The continuing crossover success of **SAY SHE SHE** has been particularly pleasing to witness, given the fact that *Shindig!* gave them their very first UK press. We called second album *Silver* (Colemine) "an infectious groove packed delight". You sense that 2024 is theirs for the taking.

Music can be our salvation in troubling times, so thank you to **THE FAITHFUL BROTHERS** from Israel, who gave us an authentic taste of northern soul on their eponymous debut album, released on Mister Mellow's Music. **THE SEXTONES** unleashed a Lowrider classic with *Love Can't Be Borrowed* (Record Kicks) and **THE KEVIN FINGIER COLLECTIVE** from Argentina wowed us on *Not Strictly Soul* (Acid Jazz) with a "truly addictive blend of exotic dance flavours". Even the lovely **EDGAR JONES** swapped the weed bus for the soul train with his wonderfully authentic album *Reflections Of A Soul Dimension* (Stereopar). Check out the Golden Rules label too. Their mission is "bringing soul back to the people" and the *Originals* series comes highly recommended (see review this issue).

The Stax archive campaign takes the accolades for best soul reissues of the year. *Written In Their Soul: The Stax Songwriter Demos* (Stax/Craft Recordings) was a revealing and superbly presented deep dive into the inner workings of Stax songwriters. It was preceded by the wallet busting *Wattstax '72: Soul'd Out The Complete Wattstax Collection* (Stax/Craft Recordings). The historical concert captured in full for the very first time, across a range of attractive, albeit expensive formats.

We also gave a thumbs up to **THE SOUTHSIDE MOVEMENT**'s self-titled 1973 debut (Real Gone), labelling the album a crate digger delight. We dug the high-energy funk of **THE RHYTHM MAKERS'** '76 opus *Soul On Your Side* (Be With). The Numero Group produced two interesting retrospectives from cult soul artists **HELENE SMITH** and **BARBARA STANT**, Light In The Attic put out four **BETTY DAVIS** albums and 2023 saw the welcome return of a – get this – "clean" **SLY STONE**. His autobiography *Thank You Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin* (Orion) is a real page-turner and had us diving into the Sly & The Family Stone back catalogue.

The Ace/Kent stable continues to churn out delectable soul and funk 45s, with recent **DARROW FLETCHER** and **BILLY GARNER** singles amongst the pick of the bunch. Album-wise, we especially enjoyed reissues of **PARLIAMENT** (*Mothership Connection*), **MELVIN SPARKS** (*75*) and a second retrospective of **WILLIAM BELL**'s Stax Singles, *Man In The Street: The Complete Yellow Stax Solo Singles*. What a thrill it was to speak to the great man for our *Wattstax* piece (see issue #137). On the compilations front, *Shrine Northern* and *Loma Northern Soul* showcased some rare soul gems from two important record labels. Finally, Bob Stanley's *Tribal Rites Of The New Saturday Night* took us back to the origins of disco and the '70s underground New York club scene. Some of us haven't quite made it back.

Reissue/Archival

1. WE ALL TOGETHER • VOLUMEN II (Munster)

Munster's Iñigo Pastor: "The fact that an album like this one receives such an award denotes so many positive things, especially considering it was conceived in a country, Peru, far from being home to the global movers and shakers and totally off the radar for most international music lovers until very recent times. Having received such a recognition from the writers' poll shows the openness and exquisite music taste of the extended *Shindig!* family and their ability to spot quality without prejudices. Thanks to all of them. We promise to deliver many more exciting installments in our reissue series that will hopefully become future favorites of you. Stay tuned!"

2. **Barbara Moore – Vocal Shades And Tones** (Be With)
3. **Bowes Road Band – Back In The HCA** (Uno Loop)
4. **Guy Pedersen – Contrebasses / Maxi Music** (Be With)
5. **Parliament – Mothership Connection** (BGP)
6. **Pearls Before Swine – One Nation Underground / Balaklava** (Earth)
7. **Pete Dello & Friends – Into Your Ears** (Hanky Panky)
8. **Pharoah Sanders – Pharoah** (Luaka Bop)
9. **The Soundcarriers – Celeste** (Phosphonic)
10. **The Roger Webb Sound – Moonshade** (Be With)
11. **Betty Davis – Betty Davis / They Say I'm Different** (Light In The Attic)
12. **Daniel Romano – Dandelion** (You've Changed)
13. **Gal Costa – India: 50th Anniversary Edition** (Mr Bongo)
14. **Meiko Kaji – Hajiki Uta** (We Want Sounds)
15. **Fuchsia – Fucshia** (Guerrsen)
16. **CA Quintet – Trip Thru Hell** (Sundazed)
17. **Reg King – Reg King: Deluxe Edition** (Strawberry)
18. **Dorothy Ashby – The Rubaiyat Of Dorothy Ashby** (Verve)
19. **Super Furry Animals – Phantom Power** (BMG)
20. **The Seeds – The Seeds** (Big Beat)

Box Set

1. THE WHO • WHO'S NEXT / LIFE HOUSE (Polydor/UMC)

2. **Various Artists – Written In Their Soul: The Stax Songwriter Demos** (Stax/Craft Recordings)
3. **Nuggets: Original Artyfacts From The First Psychedelic Era (50th Anniversary)** (Rhino)
4. **Wattstax '72 Soul'd Out: The Complete Wattstax Collection** (Stax/Craft Recordings)
5. **The Teardrop Explodes – Culture Bunker 1978-1982** (UMC/EMI)
6. **Various Artists - Eddie Piller Presents British Mod Sounds Volume 2** (Demon)
7. **Brian Auger's Oblivion Express – Complete Oblivion** (Soul Bank Music)
8. **Donovan – A Gift From A Flower To A Garden** (The State51 Conspiracy)
9. **The Monkees – Headquarters (Super Deluxe Edition)** (Rhino)
10. **Iggy & The Stooges – Raw Power (50th Anniversary Legacy Edition)** (Legacy Recordings)

Compilation (single artist)

1. **THE WEST COAST POP ART EXPERIMENTAL BAND • A DOOR INSIDE YOUR MIND: THE COMPLETE REPRISE RECORDINGS 1966-1968** (Grapefruit)

Reissue producer Gray Newell: "It's gratifying when your humble efforts to bring the music that you love to a wider audience attain some recognition, so it came as a very pleasant surprise to learn that *A Door Inside Your Mind* has been voted as the best single-artist compilation in the *Shindig!* writers' poll. A lot of time and effort went into putting this set together and it is heartening to see this appreciation for all the hard work put into the project by myself, Alec Palao, Andy Morten, John Reed and the team at Cherry Red, and not forgetting the WCPAEB. Thank you!"

2. **Honeybus – Under The Silent Tree: Gentle Sounds With Strings And Things At The BBC 1967-1973** (Hanky Panky)
3. **Nancy Sinatra – Keep Walkin': Singles, Demos & Rarities 1965-1978** (Light In The Attic)
4. **Laurie Styvers – Gemini Girl: The Complete Hush Recordings** (High Moon)
5. **The Daily Flash – The Legendary Recordings 1965-1967** (Guerssen)
6. **The American Dream – 1969 Rundgren Demos** (Guerssen)
7. **13th Floor Elevators – 13 Of The Best** (Charly/International Artists)
8. **Godley & Creme – Fly Away: The Frabjoy & Runcible Spoon Sessions 1968-1969** (Guerssen)
9. **Mort Garson – Journey To The Moon And Beyond** (Sacred Bones)
10. **Dark – Catalogue Raisonne Volumes I-XIII** (Seelie Court)

Compilation (various artists)

1. **BOB STANLEY PRESENTS LONDON A-Z 1962-1973** (Ace)

2. **Too Much Sun Will Burn: The British Psychedelic Sounds Of 1967 Volume 2** (Grapefruit)
3. **Folk, Funk & Beyond: The Arrangements Of John Cameron** (Ace)
4. **When The Alarm Clock Rings: A Compendium Of British Psychedelia 1966-1969** (Grapefruit)
5. **Tribal Rites Of The New Saturday Night: Brooklyn Disco 1974-75** (Ace)
6. **Folk Funk & Trippy Troubadours Volume 2** (ReWarm)
7. **Jon Savage's 1980-1982: The Art Of Things To Come** (Ace)
8. **Programme Music: More Themes From The Josef Weinberger Library 1965-1980** (Buried Treasure)
9. **If There's Hell Below...** (Numero Group)
10. **Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present Incident At A Free Festival** (Ace)

Tune Up

THOMAS PATTERSON gets jazzed

Jazz In Britain has been consistently impressive, with long lost live sets and previously unreleased albums from **JOE HARRIOTT, CHRIS LAURENCE** and **KARL JENKINS**. They continued to bring the heat throughout the year, another highpoint being *Warm Up*, a live set from 1965 that caught **THE DON RENDELL/IAN CARR QUINTET** at its blistering best.

Also coming up with the British goods was new label British Progressive Jazz, who unearthed vintage recordings from Canterbury scene-adjacent artists like **KEITH TIPPET, ELTON DEAN** and **PIP PYLE**. My Only Desire found an absolute beauty in the shape of **GRAHAM COLLIER**'s *Down Another Road @ Stockholm Jazz Days '69*, and look set to bring more gems with their new series of 45s. **JOY**'s self-titled LP from '76 is a gorgeous work, rescued from obscurity by Cadillac. Perhaps best of all was **THE STAN TRACEY QUARTET**'s *Jazz Suite Inspired By Dylan Thomas' Under Milk Wood* on beautifully remastered vinyl from Resteamed.

Germany's Altercat offered up a dynamic LP from Chilean-born pianist **MATIAS PIZZARO**, starting a run that would offer up albums but such under-the-radar artists as **HORACIO 'CHIVO' BORRAO**. One of the best compilations of the year landed in the shape of Strut's *John Sinclair Presents Detroit Artists Workshop*, which includes cuts from **YUSELF LATEEF** and **BENNIE MAUPIN**. If one genre has been particularly floating *Shindig!*'s boat, however, it's South African jazz, and Matsuli and We Are Busy Bodies have both been busy – Matsuli's new edition of **ALLEN KWELA**'s *Black Beauty* from '75 particularly impressive.

Flying Dutchman reissues have been terrific, taking in albums from such greats as **LEON THOMAS, LONNIE LISTON SMITH** and **OLIVER NELSON**, while Rhino have been similarly industrious, with **BILLY COBHAM**'s *Spectrum* and **JOHN COLTRANE**'s *Olé Coltrane*. Craft (and their subsidiaries such as Jazz Dispensary) have brought as a ton of brilliant albums, from **VINCE GUARALDI, EDDIE 'LOCKJAW' DAVIS', BERNARD PURDIE, JACK DEJOHNETTE, WOODY SHAW** and **LEON SPENCER**, whilst Craft have delved through their archives for classic works from **CHARLES MINGUS, DON ELLIS** and beyond. Yet if two labels are going to get plaudits from all quarters this year, it's probably Luaka Bop, whose expanded edition of **PHAROAH SANDERS**' rare '77 album *Sanders* had everyone raving in the jazz aisles, and Be With, thanks to their repress of **THE TONY WILLIAMS LIFETIME**'s amazing *Emergency!*

New artists have been similarly impressive. International Anthem out of Chicago have brought us the best of American artists, while WeWantSounds have jumped all over the globe in search of fine music. From Britain, there's been a wealth of good gear from **SOWETO KINCH, NUBYA GARCIA** and Mercury Prize winners **EZRA COLLECTIVE**. Let us steer you however towards London's **BUNNDEBRETTQUINTET**. They released their second self-titled album at the tail-end of 2022, but they've continued the good work in 2023 with a few ultra-limited 45s that sold out within minutes. Old *Shindig!* pal **GREG FOAT** was as prolific as ever, and his album *Dolphin*, recorded for Strut with **GIGI MASIN** is a beauty. Best of all were new albums from Scandinavia. Two faves were **COBRA KRAFT**'s *The Baptism Of Pedro Del Zorro*, on actor Crispin Glover's own label, and *Echoes* by **FIRE! ORCHESTRA** on Rune Grammafon, an album filled with fire and blood that demonstrates how powerful modern jazz can be.

Prog Nosis

MARCO ROSSI keeps it in the family

Ah man, I can only apologise for the paucity of prog columns in *Shindig!* over the past year. As far as my writing was concerned, I was working on the principle of "quality, not quantity", but in the end I went with neither. My unpardonable laxity meant that, in keeping with my general *modus inoperandi* of late, a lot of worthwhile stuff only appeared on the outer fringes of my radar or shot past it completely undetected while my sweaty back was turned.

I did at least clock the presence of a clutch of **FAMILY** reissues, which I'm relieved about because I wouldn't want you to limp into 2024 without knowing how much I adore them. *Anyway*, *Fearless* and *Bandstand* have all resurfaced on Esoteric, remastered to within 12 inches of their lives and fair bristling with extra tracks. For me, Family exemplified an innately progressive attitude that had approximately nothing to do with capes and concepts, and absolutely everything to do with pushing the envelope in all directions simultaneously. I will keep banging on about this distinction until (a) anyone listens, or (b) I die. I haven't ruled out (c) haunting you all from a perch in the afterlife about it.

Ever the contrarian, I should probably quantify this by admitting that I don't mind the odd swish of a cape every now and again. **CHRIS SQUIRE**'s '1975 solo album *Fish Out Of Water* (Esoteric) was treated to a painstaking vinyl cut at Abbey Road Studios this year, and it's an enjoyably brazen effort from the late bassist whose '70s stage apparel cheeringly pitched him somewhere between Adam Adamant and Dogtanian. See also this year's clear-vinyl reissue of the somersaulting' 71 lodestone *Fragile* (Atlantic/Rhino) by Squire's day-job employers YES.

And while we're in none-more-prog territory, it would be churlish not to point out that *The Broadsword And The Beast* (Chrysalis) by **JETHRO TULL** is now available as a vinyl/CD bundle from the Burning Shed website. Originally released in '82, it struggled to chart any higher than 27 with a title that weighed as much as sodden chain mail; but its new Steven Wilson remix highlights how contrastingly deft and sprightly its performances are.

Backing away from capes once more – executing a, cough, *great es-cape*, if you will – I very much enjoyed *I Am The Witch: The Anthology* (Grapefruit) by **CIRCUS 2000**, Italian berserkers who sounded like Shocking Blue in a vat of itching powder. I also went a bundle all over again on *The Complete Liberty Recordings* (Esoteric) by **HIGH TIDE**, who were basically four storm fronts colliding over an electricity substation. Meanwhile, a fresh reissue of the self-titled '70 debut album by **PATTO** (Think Like A Key) made me genuflect so much at the altar of Ollie Halsall that my knees went on strike.

Kudos also to a brace of 4-CD prog primers from Esoteric, *Wind Of Change* and *Round And Round*, which vindicate or implicate the classes of '73 and '74, depending on your progclivities.

Single

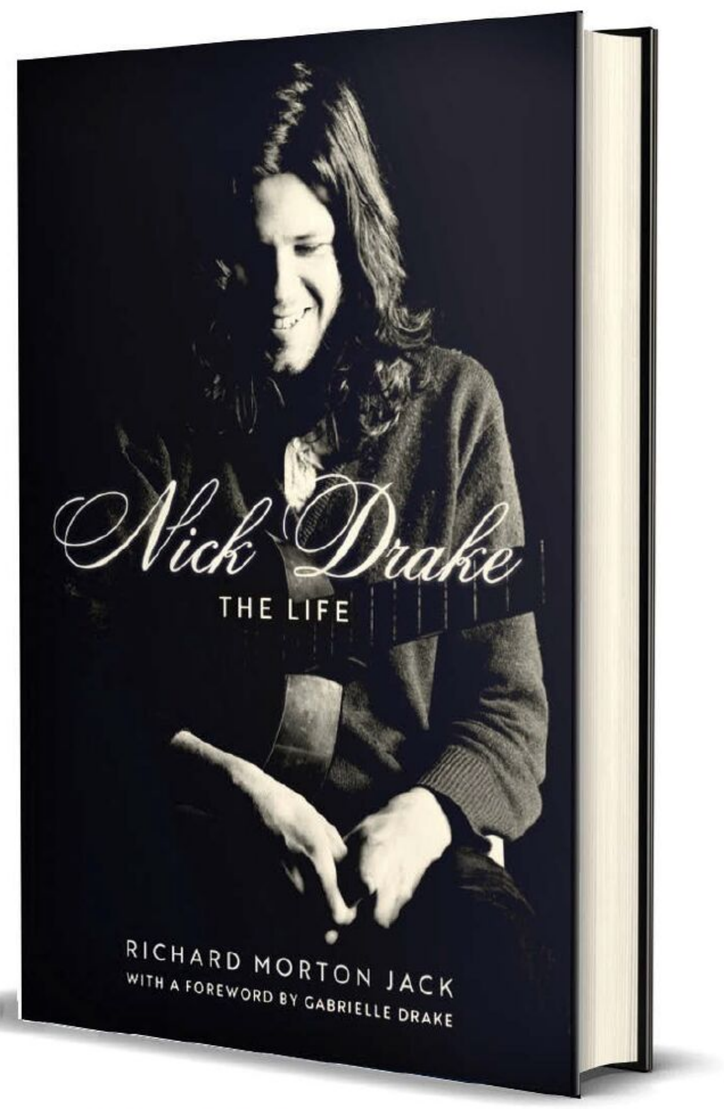
1. HOPSCOTCH / ANDWELLA – LOOK AT THE LIGHTS GO UP / HOLD ON TO YOUR MIND (Measured Mile)

Measured Mile's Bob Stanley: "I'm absolutely thrilled to have won not one but two *Shindig!* awards (see also Compilation (Various Artists) on previous page). Thank you! The Measured Mile 45s are a treat to release, and much trickier to organise than people might imagine, so it's great for one of them to receive this recognition. My deepest thanks to Liz Buckley, who does all the legal clearances for Ace and Measured Mile, to Neil Scaplehorn and Ian Shirley at Ace, and to Neil Dell who helps me to realise the artwork, which is always very important to me. Cheers everyone."

2. **Various Artists – Folklore EP** (Fruits de Mer)
3. **Karen Verros – You Just Gotta Know My Mind / Karen's Theme** (Measured Mile)
4. **The New Eves – Original Sin / Mother** (Broadside Hacks)
5. **The Primitives – Don't Know Where To Start EP** (Happy Happy Birthday To Me)
6. **The Smoking Trees – Funtime Sunshine / '66** (Hypnotic Bridge)
7. **The Thanes – Les Thanes EP** (Disques Rogue)
8. **Dollsquad – Tiki Lifestyle / Cave Gurl** (Go-Go-Bone Rekkidz)
9. **Elia y Elizabeth – ¡Alegria! / Ponte Bajo El Sol** (Vampisoul)
10. **The Yardbirds – Happenings Ten Years Time Ago / Psycho Daisies** (Demon)

Book

1. NICK DRAKE: THE LIFE – RICHARD MORTON JACK (John Murray)



Richard Morton Jack: "'Thank you so much for this tremendous compliment. Putting this book together involved a lot of painstaking research and interviewing, of the sort that *Shindig!* has always championed, and reminded me that there are still important things to be found under old stones if one looks hard enough. As *Shindig!* readers know all too well, Nick's life was blighted by mental illness, but I hope my book balances his tragic decline with the happiness and triumphs that preceded it and will ultimately help people enjoy his magical work all the more."

2. **Bee Gees: Children Of The World – Bob Stanley** (Nine Eight)
3. **The Island Book Of Records Volume I: 1959-68 – Neil Storey** (Manchester University Press)
4. **The Stooges: The Truth Is In The Sound We Make – Per Nilsen & Carlton Sandercock** (Wintergarden Publishing)
5. **Happy Trails – Andrew Lauder with Mick Houghton** (White Rabbit)
6. **Clean Living Under Difficult Circumstances: A Life In Mod – Eddie Piller** (Monoray)
7. **Thank You Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin – Sly Stone** (Orion)
8. **Love And Let Die: Bond, The Beatles And The British Psyche – John Higgs** (Hachette)
9. **Whole World In An Uproar: Music, Rebellion And Repression 1955-1972 – Aaron Leonard** (Repeater)
10. **The Delaware Road: Omnibus Edition – Alan Gubby** (Buried Treasure)

Label

1. **BE WITH**
2. Ace
3. Grapefruit
4. Light In The Attic
5. Guerssen
6. Colemine
7. Mr Bongo
8. Numero Group
9. Four Flies
10. Two-Piers

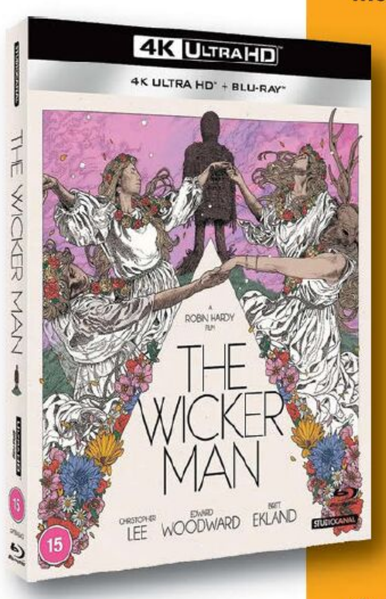
Be With's Rob Butler: "Wow! What an honour this is. Thanks *Shindig!* It's like the record label equivalent of The Football Writers' Award, right? Going into our 10th year of existence, it's really nice to be recognised for the work we've been doing this year. Running an independent vinyl-only label can often seem like a thankless task, but this year it feels like we've started to emerge out of the triple whammy of *manufacturing delays/COVID/Brexshit* and been able to focus our attention firmly on putting great records back out there. Look out for 2024 as it's likely to be our best yet!"

Live Show

1. **FATHER JOHN MISTY SINGS THE SONGS OF SCOTT WALKER - THE BARBICAN, LONDON**
2. The Dream Syndicate & Rain Parade – The Lexington, London
3. The Lemon Twigs - Electric Ballroom, London
4. Lenny Kaye's Nuggets Golden Jubilee Band- Hoboken Arts Fest, New Jersey
5. Daniel Romano's Outfit - The Louisiana, Bristol
6. The Hives – Pryzm, Kingston-Upon-Thames
7. Melody's Echo Chamber - The Scala, London
8. Lewes Psych Fest - All Saints Centre, Lewes
9. The Courettes – Brudenell Social Club, Leeds
10. The Fugs - City Winery, New York

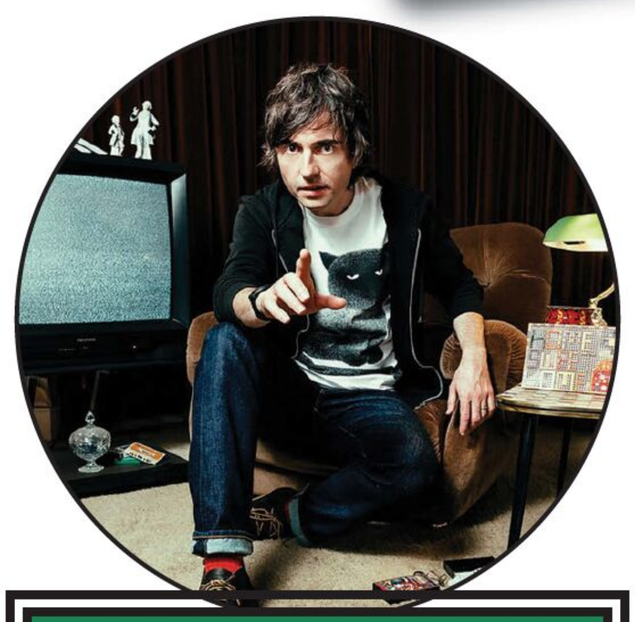
Film/TV

1. **THE WICKER MAN: 50TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTOR'S EDITION**
2. Have You Got It Yet? The Story Of Syd Barrett And Pink Floyd
3. Enys Men
4. Cymande: Getting It Back
5. Mind On The Run: The Basil Kirchin Story
6. The Gallows Pole
7. Tiny Tim: King For A Day
8. Rude Boys: The Trojan Records Story
9. Little Richard: I Am Everything
10. Daisy Jones & The Six



Radio/Podcast

1. **UNCANNY**
2. Scarred For Life
3. Ugly Things
4. Stuart Maconie's Freakzone
5. Sail On: The Beach Boys Podcast
6. Bureau Of Lost Culture
7. The Jonny Trunk Patreon Show
8. David Holmes: God's Waiting Room
9. The Strange Brew
10. Nothing Is Real: A Beatles Podcast



***Uncanny*'s Danny Robins** (above): "I'm delighted to have won this. Thanks to *Shindig!* for their great support and to all our listeners who form the lovely #UncannyCommunity, sceptics and believers alike. It means a lot!"

Shop

1. **SOUNDS OF THE UNIVERSE, LONDON**
2. Flashback, London
3. Monorail, Glasgow
4. Rough Trade East, London
5. Piccadilly, Manchester
6. Reckless, London
7. Wah Wah, Barcelona
8. Rise Above Records And Relics, London
9. Wow And Flutter, Hastings
10. Crocodisc, Paris

Sounds Of The Universe/Soul Jazz's Angela Scott: "Sounds Of The Universe is so happy to be honoured by *Shindig!*'s writers as best record store of 2023! We hope we can give you all a warm welcome in the shop next time you're in Soho. And we're always pleased to be of service online when you're not in town."

Waxin' Celluloid

THOMAS PATTERSON picks the soundtracks to his year

The movie business may have come to a grinding halt this year with striking actors and writers galore, but the soundtracks have been coming thick and fast, especially from outside of the USA. Italy has been well-represented as ever, with Sonor repressing rare beauties from **PIERO PICCIONI** and **GIULIANO SORGINI**, CAM Sugar, who've brought out soundtracks and library albums from revered composers like **UGO CALISE**, and the ever reliable Four Flies, who offered up an endless supply of 45s from artists such as **PIERO UMILIANI** and that fella Sorgini again. **CALIBRO 35** have continued the Italian soundtrack tradition with their score for TV show *Blanca 2*, a blistering piece of cinematic funk released on Record Kicks. ABKCO dug out **STELVIO CIPRIANI**'s '71 spaghetti western soundtrack *Blindman* (and on a non-Italian tip, reissued **JODOROWSKY**'s *Holy Mountain* and *El Topo*.)

Horror was well-represented as ever, making up the lion's share of releases from labels like of Waxwork and Mondo, but we were particularly fond of the folk-horror end of things, especially **MARK JENKIN**'s score for his own micro-budget movie *Enys Men*, and **GOAT**'s soundtrack to Shane Meadows' adaptation of *The Gallows Pole*. Library Of The Occult brought us fake soundtracks galore, like **IVAN THE TOLERABLE**'s *Under Magnetic Mountain*, alongside a book club that imagined up soundtracks to classic novels, such as **THE LIBRARY OF THE OCCULT ELECTRONIC ORCHESTRA**'s soundtrack to *Bram Stoker*'s *Dracula*.

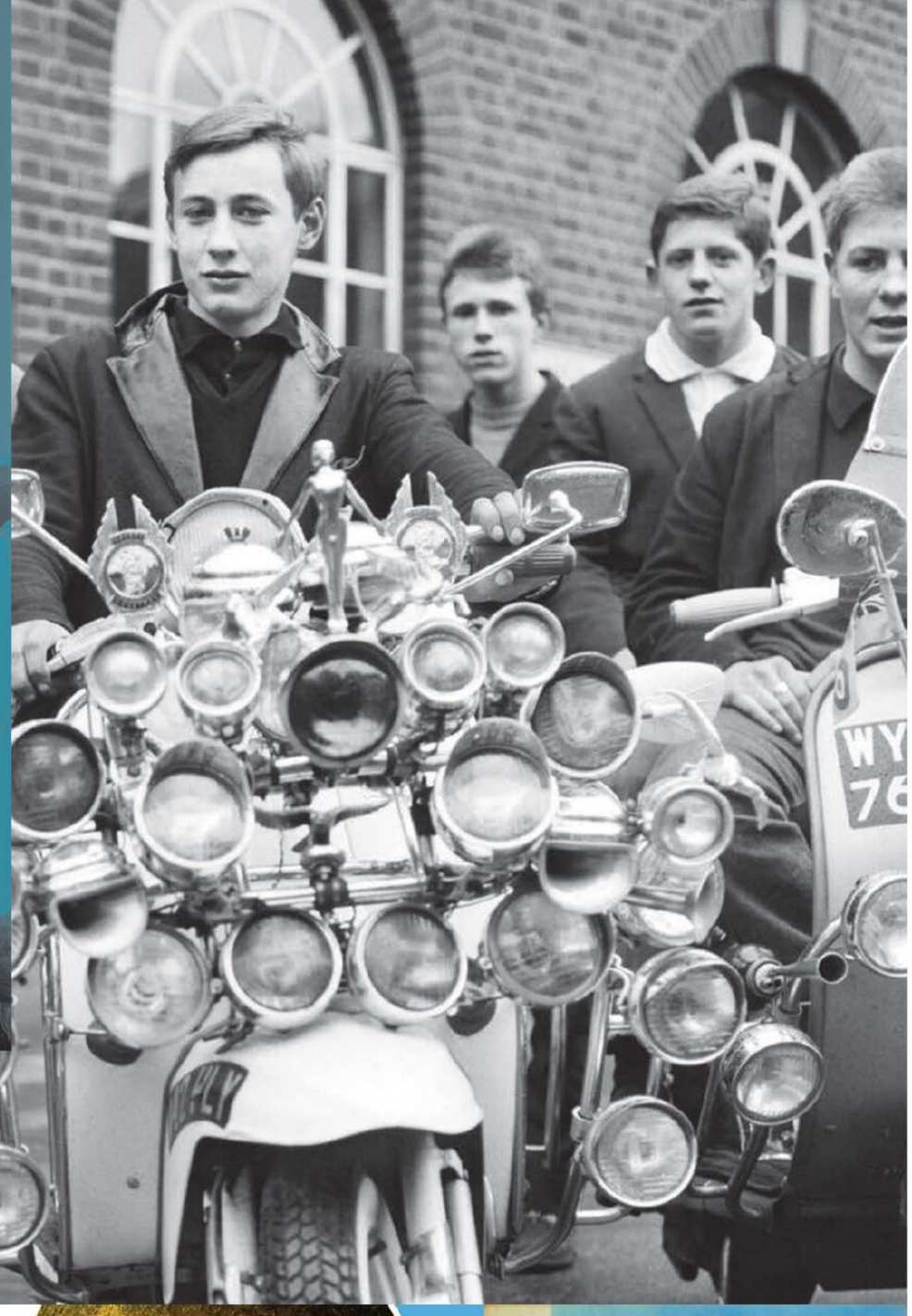
Silva Screen also delved into horror with **JAMES BERNARD**'s spooky score to *The Devil Rides Out*, issued as both an album and a pentagram-shaped 45 released on RSD, but beyond scary sounds, they also repressed **DAVID SHIRE**'s classic Coppola soundtrack *The Conversation*, and gave us Gerry Anderson-related product galore, including **BARRY GRAY**'s rollicking score for *Joe 90*.

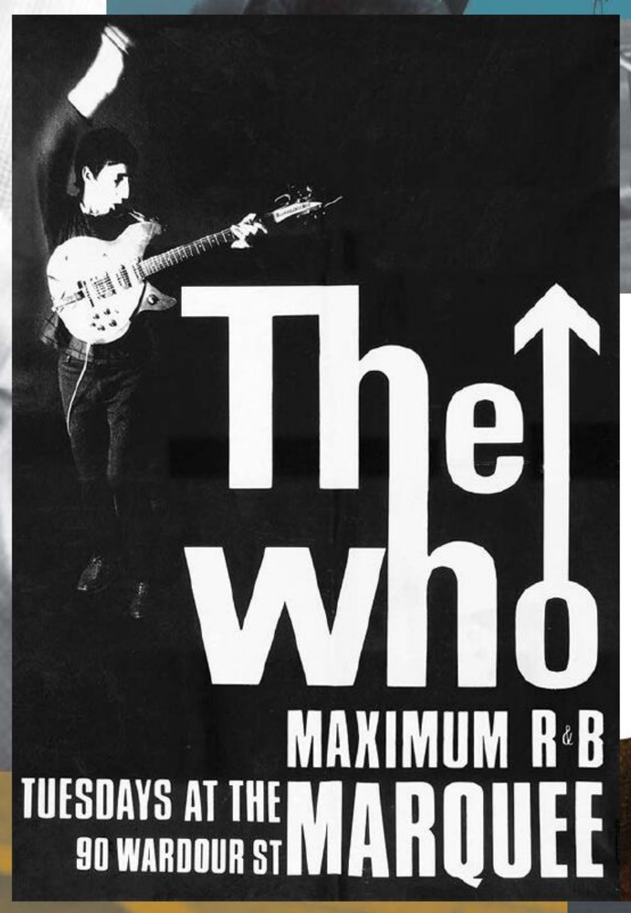
Space age sounds abounded from Sacred Bones, who raided **MORT GARSON**'s archive to bring us *Journey To The Moon And Beyond*, a selection of cues from across the electronic pioneer's career. They also uncovered Garson's *Black Eye*, a blaxploitation soundtrack that sounds unlike much else in his back catalogue. Sacred Bones touched upon horror with *Anthology II*, a second volume of synth-led cues from **JOHN CARPENTER** movies, perfect for next year's Halloween.

We'll close out with a few standalones. Jazz and soundtrack often overlapped this year, and **ANDRE PREVIN**'s *West Side Story* and **SHELLY MANNE**'s *My Fair Lady* could have landed in either column. **GALT MACDERMOT**'s *Woman Is Sweeter*, recorded for a '69 documentary on Yves Saint Laurent, was reissued on Now-Again, whilst WeWantSounds dug out **LALO SCHIFRIN**'s '74 score to *Man On A Swing*. French label Le Pop Club brought us obscure soundtracks from **CLAUDE BOLLING** and **PIERRE BACHELET** and are heading down the "fake soundtrack" route with scores to imaginary movies by contemporary artists like **SAVARIT** and **INITIALS MB**.

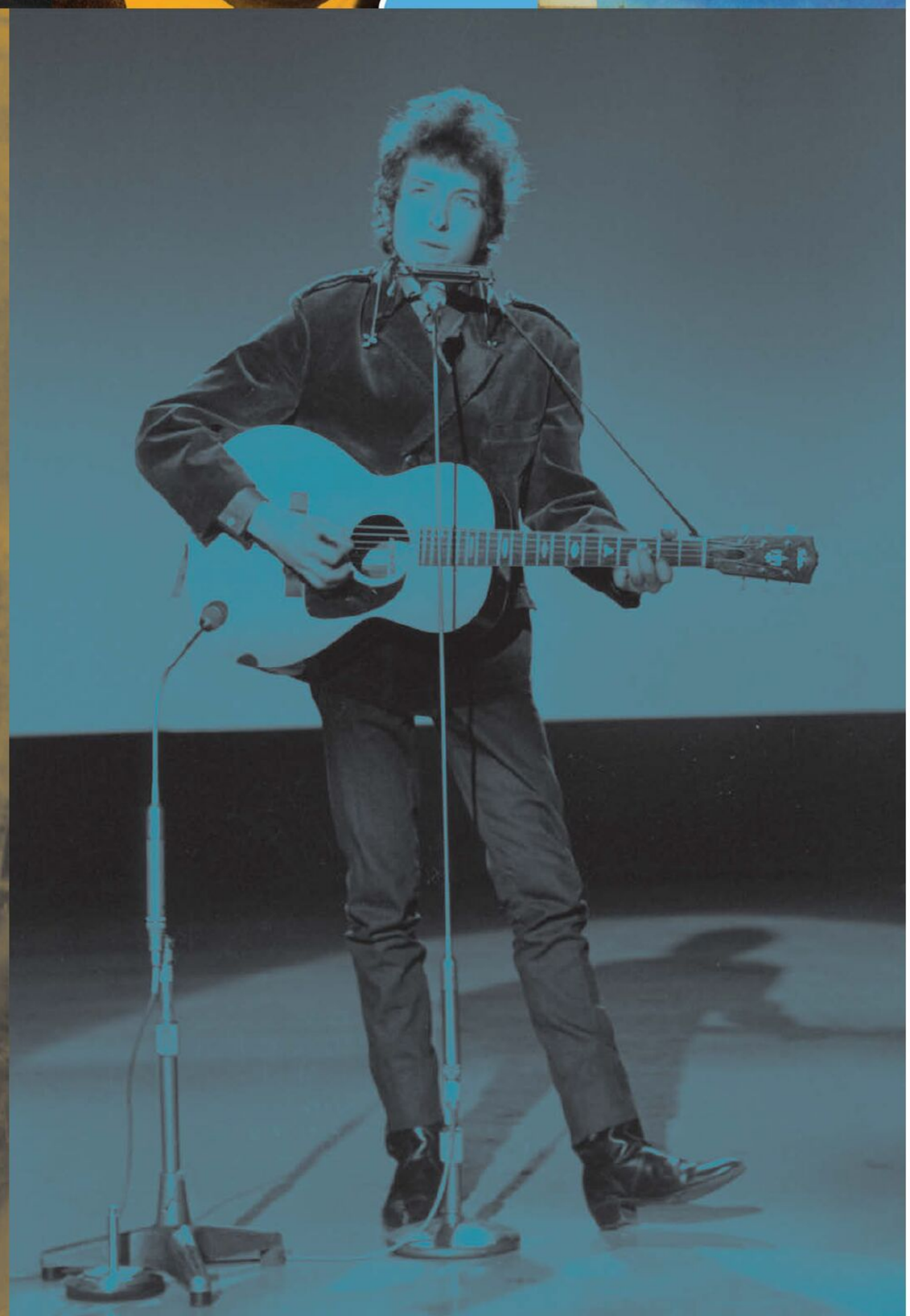
Our absolute favourite this year, however, was **DUNCAN LAMONT**'s wonderful score to classic cartoon *Mr Benn*, an instant sell out on RSD and with good reason – there hasn't been a more delightful release all year. Luckily it was recently repressed, so you can head out on your own magic soundtrack adventure without having to drop eye-watering sums in the process!

1964-84





1964 sees Key Colyer lead the UK jazz revival; The Beatles land in America; mods follow The Who, buy Booker T & The MG's records and dance on *Ready Steady Go*; The Zombies embody The British Invasion; Bob Dylan turns it all on its head



ONWARDS AND BACKWARDS

To introduce three features that focus on the years 1964, '74 and '84, SARAH GREGORY walks through three rapidly moving decades during which popular music developed at lightning speeds – a time when a pair of trousers was out of date in six months, and innovation and rule-breaking lurked round every corner, yet we were never far away from a nostalgic revival

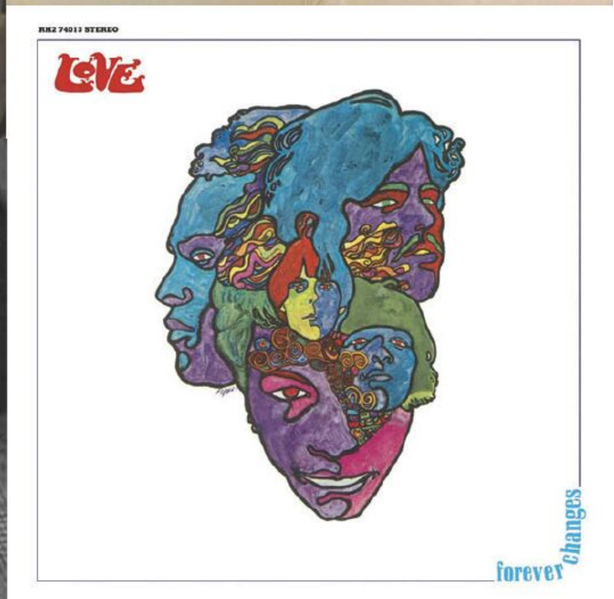
On 3rd August 1963, The Beatles played their final gig at Liverpool's renowned Cavern Club. Six months later they landed on the tarmac of New York's JFK airport with the first of 20 *Billboard* chart #1s under their belt. This moment more than any other has come to symbolise the eruption of popular culture as we know it today. It ushered in the golden age of modern music, and nothing was ever the same again.

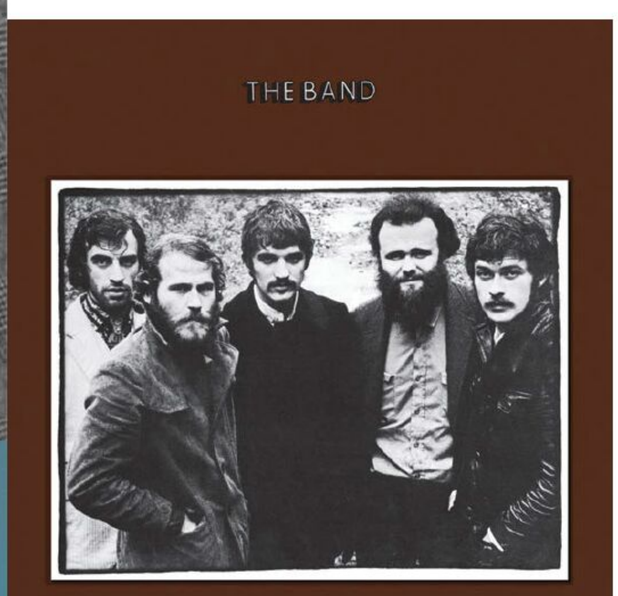
Some may argue that when it comes to popular music, 1956 was year zero. The time of Elvis, Buddy Holly, Little Richard and Carl Perkins. And they may have a point. Before then, there hadn't been an awful lot for young people to get excited about. Teenagers were in the ascendancy and rock 'n' roll music was the perfect counterpart. All too soon events conspired to destroy its momentum – the crooners and blue-eyed boys alike rising to the fore once again. But you can't keep a good thing down and by then the wheels, were firmly in motion; a fuse had been lit. It wasn't long before blues, jazz, soul and rock 'n' roll combined to create something that was never going away.

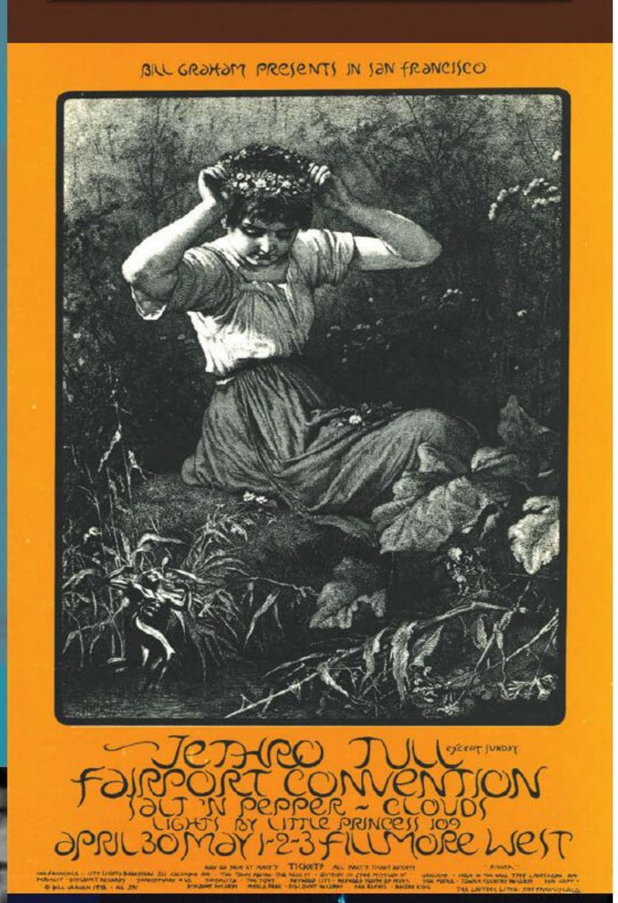
By '64, teenagers were enjoying having a bit of cash in their pocket and had aspiration for something better than their parents had. Everything was standing in their favour. Post-war restrictions fully dispensed with; Macmillan's archaic Tory government was teetering on the brink. Over in the US, meanwhile, the combined double whammy of JFK's assassination and The Cuban Missile Crisis seemed to light a fire under the youth of America who, like their British counterparts, were beginning to enjoy the newfound freedoms of a generation unencumbered by social mores.

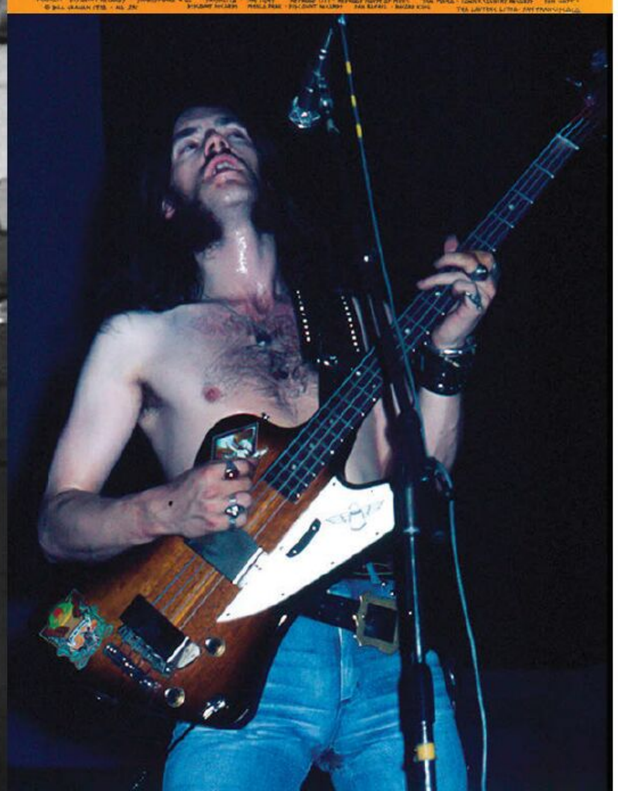
The extent to which Brits took largely overlooked American homegrown music (and mainly Black music at that) to their hearts is a story that hails back as far as jazz purist Ken Colyer. Colyer joined the merchant navy just so he could experience the original New Orleans jazz greats for himself and while most of the budding musicians of the early '60s might not have been as extreme in their adulation, it is without doubt Black American music that unreservedly inspired the '60s British bands. Taking their lead from the early soul records of James Brown or Booker T or the Delta Blues, the young Brits wanted to emulate their heroes. They didn't know where it may lead – there was no precedent after all – and most of them didn't really care, they were just looking to embrace the music and have a good time. And it was right when the heat was beginning to rise in clubs all across the UK, that The Beatles kicked the doors wide open. The Americans couldn't get enough of the British invaders as The Zombies, The Animals, The Hollies, The Dave Clark Five (and countless others) planted their flag and London became the centre of the universe.

But despite the hands across the water, there were some quintessentially British movements that to all intents and purposes remained very much a British concern. Borne out of late '50s jazz (that'll be Colyer again), the early modernists were a disparate set of working-class aesthetes driven by style consciousness and a sense of the bohemian, gathering in the Soho coffee shops. By '64, the mods had developed into a distinct movement epitomised by a devotion to Italian fashion, scooters and galvanised by their "own" music courtesy of The Who, The Small Faces, The Kinks and the tougher-sounding freakbeat deployed by The Troggs, The Creation and The Pretty Things. Elsewhere, throughout the north of England, an enclave of clubs started to appear that were dedicated to unearthing rare high-tempo soul records. Manchester's Twisted Wheel opened in '63 and after the bands played, all-night deejays would take their place. The Golden Torch in Stoke, the Blackpool Mecca and the Wigan Casino soon followed and by the early '70s northern soul had taken a firm grip on much of the nation's youth. On the face of it vastly different from the mods, the two groups actually had much in common – a loyal following, dress code, a deep love of music and amphetamines!









The Byrds (top) in London, August 1965; Soft Machine (above) at The Speakeasy, London, '67; The MC5 pledge allegiance, '69; a scene from a Wigan Casino all-nighter, mid-70s; uprising in Paris; Love and The Band offer game-changing long-players; UK folk-rock makes its way to the US west coast; Lemmy drives Hawkwind to distraction, and almost destruction

Back over in the US it wasn't all about The Union Jack. The Beach Boys were Surfin' USA and foundations were being laid for The Byrds, Love, The Doors, The Mamas & The Papas – the iconic mid-60s California bands. While there's no doubt that The Beatles were pivotal, lest we forget America had a pretty big hero of its own. Dylan was in the ascendancy long before the Fabs materialised and was so ahead of the curve by '64 that he was almost ready to abandon purist folk in favour of his electric Judas act. Acoustic or not, the shadow of Dylan has loomed large over popular music, shaping almost every artist who aspired to make music with meaning. And what a marvellously fluid time this was – artists inspired one another, creating a musically-competitive fervour from which the listener reaped the reward. Dylan influenced The Beatles and The Byrds; and Brian Wilson The Beatles. This good-natured rivalry is what gave the world *Blonde On Blonde*, *Rubber Soul*, *Sgt Pepper* and *Pet Sounds*.

By '66, things had moved on. "The pop world accelerated and broke through the sound barrier in '66... revolutionary ideas across pop, pop-art, fashion and radical politics that had been slow-cooking since the late '50s reached boiling point," observes Jon Savage in his wonderful account *1966: The Year The Decade Exploded*. By this point, LSD was seeping into public consciousness and the nascent hippie dream rested alongside the essential political and social issues of the day. Vietnam was ramping up and civil rights were becoming a mainstay of active political consciousness as student risings erupted across American campuses and the peaceful demos of Martin Luther King surrendered to the more militant and galvanising approach of The Black Panthers. The FBI and the government were having none of it – insistent on stamping out any form of ostensibly threatening behaviour with a violent and disproportionate response. In this environment, it's not unsurprising that music was changing too. Dylan and the protest folk musicians had been using their lyrical prowess to galvanise listeners for years, but as political and social awareness advanced the vast majority were becoming less interested in songs opining lost love and wanted a message that mattered. Three-minute pop songs paid the price as albums sales started to overtake singles. Couple this with marijuana and LSD and songs were getting longer, more complex and more profound – perfect timing for psychedelia and The Summer Of Love.

Psychedelic music in the US owes a tremendous debt to the earlier garage bands. Garage was freakbeat's older transatlantic brother with roots in the rock 'n' roll and surf music worlds. With bands like The Sonics and Standells appearing at the turn of the decade, by '65 you couldn't shake a stick down the Sunset Strip without hitting a new garage band – The Seeds, Count Five, The Chocolate Watch Band, even Texas's own 13th Floor Elevators. It was the fuzz guitar so central to those garage records that played into what went on to become the psychedelic music that we know and love. It was also around this time that San Francisco began to usurp London as the centre of the musical universe – The Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin, Country Joe congregating around the Haight and Golden Gate Park. Gig going had changed too –the shrieking teenagers were gone, replaced by a new, more mature audience prepared to give their favoured artists the space and time to experiment and let the music breathe. And this in turn gave birth to the festival – The Monterey Pop Festival marking the first successful attempt to bring together likeminded people in a whirl of musical celebration – a baton swiftly picked up by Woodstock, The Isle Of Wight and Glastonbury.

"Jazz purist Ken Colyer joined the merchant navy just so he could experience the original New Orleans jazz greats for himself"

Over in Blighty, a suitably unique version of psychedelia was playing out – taking its lead from baroque, Victoriana, *Alice In Wonderland* and the risqué art of Aubrey Beardsley. Fuzzy, distorted guitar, Eastern-inflected sounds and electronic experimentation all made their way into the music of the time, no band exemplifying this changing guard more than The Yardbirds – borne of the blues, hitting the charts with 'For Your Love' in '64 and by '66 championing the zeitgeist on 'Happenings Ten Years Ago'. But it all moved pretty quickly – Joe Boyd's seminal UFO club showcasing the new musical revolution with the likes of The Pink Floyd, Soft Machine and Tomorrow lasted a matter of months before the lights began to fade on peace and love at home and abroad.

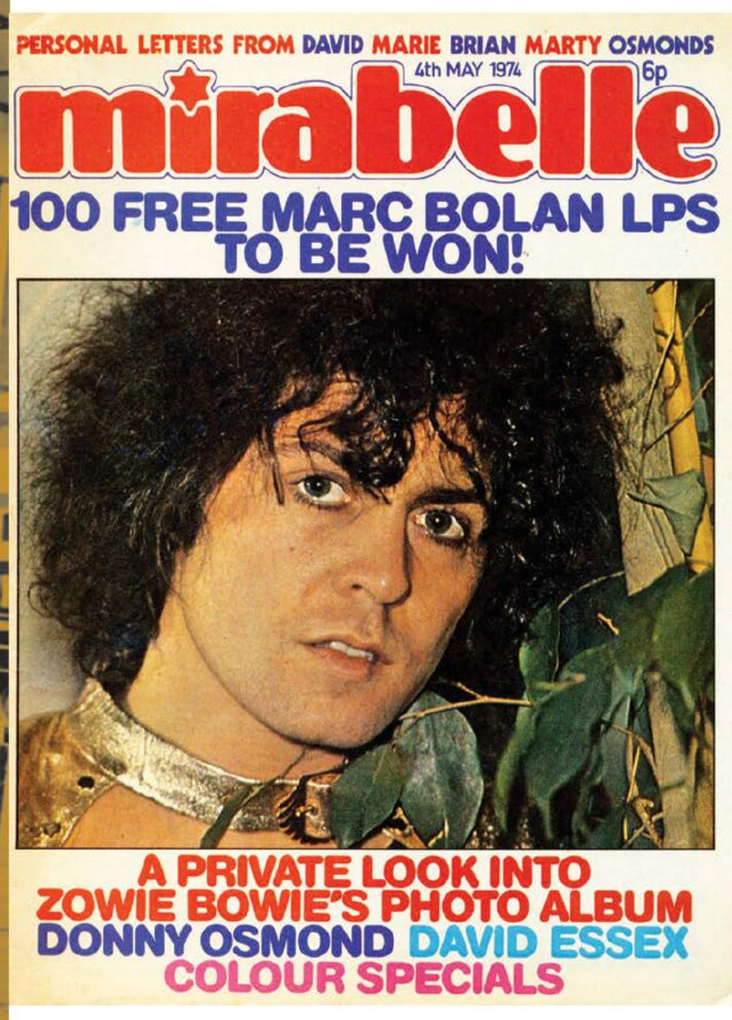
Nineteen-Sixty-Eight proved to be the watershed year. The Haight attracting those looking to prey on the vulnerable, turning it into a place of chancers and junkies, while elsewhere revolution took to the street. Paris, Prague, Amsterdam, the Troubles, anti-Vietnam protests in London, a spate of shocking musical deaths, Altamont and Manson. A rude awakening indeed. But when art meets dark times, music flourishes – the '60s making way for what is arguably the most creative and musically rich decade in pop and rock history.

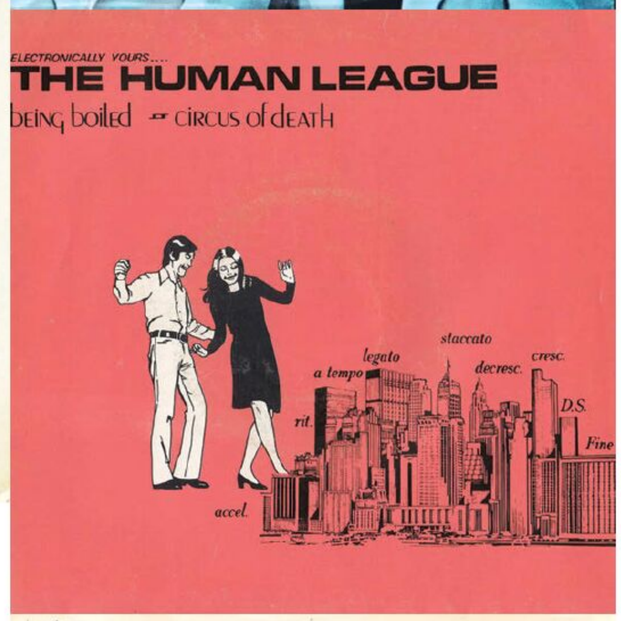
At the dawn of the '70s, music was at its most earnest. Heavy-rock had been gaining traction for some time. The likes of Hendrix, Cream and Jeff Beck had started moving towards a heavier blues aesthetic underlined by a guitar virtuosity that sat neatly alongside the clamour for greater musicality and a more engaged audience. Acid-rock by the likes of Vanilla Fudge, Iron Butterfly and Steppenwolf was spreading as The Groundhogs, The Pink Fairies, Paul Butterfield, even Hawkwind followed course. And perhaps most notably, Jimmy Page utilised his heavy-blues credentials to create Led Zeppelin – a band who always balanced the heavy with the light, but who are even now perennially placed at the forefront of the heavy metal movement. The same can be said of Black Sabbath, Deep Purple or LA's Alice Cooper, whose occult messages and equally dark accompanying sounds separated them from the heavy-blues purists. Showmanship and the macabre started to become important.

At the same time, both the boundaries between art-rock and the *avant-garde* started to blur and pop and rock started to look back to a few years before. Influenced by the concept album and a more attentive audience, the virtuosos of the late '60s started to flex their muscles melding classical, jazz, rock and any other high-art form creating music that was both incredibly complex and rewarding. Progressive music has a very definite image, even now – but the prog label is far more wide-reaching than it is usually given credit for embracing not just the usual suspects but the likes of Caravan, Soft Machine, even Pink Floyd and jazz-fusion. On the flipside, there was Zappa and Beefheart, Nico and John Cale pushing their own brand of *avant-garde* and experimental music that never bothered to trouble the charts, but which has proved to be integral to the development of music over the subsequent decades. And on both sides of the Atlantic others were already looking back, Badfinger continued The Beatles' sound into the '70s and The Raspberries, Big Star, Cheap Trick, and numerous others, built on the power chord driven pop/rock of The Small Faces and The Who for the rock generation.

And finally, we couldn't talk about the turn of the decade without referring to what Barney Hoskyns called "retrogressive, post-psychedelic music". Hoskyns may having be referring to country and folk influences of The Band, but his classification can be extended to cover the rapid advent of singer-songwriters – essentially both a rejection of psychedelic tropes and a return to basics. Folk music had always been there or thereabouts, not so much an underground movement more just above ground level, taking its lead from protest singers and trad practitioners, the Pete Seegers and the Ewan MacColls. In the UK, this evolved into folk-rock courtesy of Pentangle and Fairport Convention, while over in the US the folksiness tended

Teddy boys at the Elvis Presley Fan Club Convention, London, 1972; Marc Bolan and The Raspberries look back in the early '70s; The Fuzztones do the same 10 years later; Can (below) strive for future days, which The Human League and Gary Numan (bottom right) make flesh; Paul Weller sheds his skin in '84





to give way either to the singer-songwriter – Jackson Browne, Joni Mitchell, Simon & Garfunkel, Crosby Stills & Nash, or the persistent influence of country music. The Byrds embraced country-blues wholeheartedly, while Gene Clark jumped on board with The Dillards and Keith Richards took Gram Parsons and his Flying Burrito Brothers to heart. Exciting bands like Little Feat were borne out of the more experimental end, but ultimately what emerged were bloated rock behemoths tormented by wealth, infighting, broken relationship, while artistic integrity took a backseat.

It is of little surprise that by the mid-70s it was time for the youth to take control again. A whole host of teenagers shrugged off the sincerity of their older siblings and demanded their own pop hits. With glam-rock as the axis, three key, but uniquely different artists were to truly change the face of UK pop music: Bowie, Roxy Music and Bolan. Firm friends Bowie and Bolan had lived every fad going – mod, psych, folk – while Roxy and Bowie shared a deep high-art aesthetic. Bolan spearheaded the glam movement proper; Bowie and Roxy went far deeper. Where Bolan reinvigorated the pop song, the screaming teenager, the fun and pizzazz – leaving a trail of Wizzard, Mud and Slade in his wake – Bowie and Roxy plied their trades as musical chameleons. Roxy were art-house, oozing Hollywood glamour, while Bowie embraced glam before shape-shifting through blue-eyed soul, kosmische and new European synth minimalism.

The rebellion was on – now it was punk's turn. The argument still rages as to where punk originated – the UK or the US? But ultimately despite the obvious connections, the roots of each were quite different. Proto-punk had really begun to take root in late '60s US, first with The Velvet Underground and garage-rock, then with the scene in Detroit. There at the foreground were The MC5 – driven by revolt and apolitical extremisms. *Kick Out The Jams* was their call to arms as they embraced the radical revolutionary spirit of The White Panthers and John Sinclair. And while there are very few bands of the late '80s and '90s who don't owe a debt to The MC5, it was really their little brother band, The Stooges that broke through. Produced by John Cale in the first instance, this was a band that took the aggression and standpoint of The MC5 and ran with it. It was The Stooges and garage-rock; Patti Smith and The New York Dolls who were instrumental in the development of New York punk-rock before the baton passed to early '80s West Coast. Television kicked it all off bringing in their likeminded brethren to CBGBs, but they were never punk in the true sense of the word. In fact, the "punk" scene in those early years was highly disparate. The three-minute punk assault arrived courtesy of Ramones and The Dead Boys but it also took in the art-rock of

"By 1984, what mattered was money and wealth – community was a rude word, and the musical wheel was beginning to turn again"

Television's *Marquee Moon* and Patti Smith's *Horses* and the leftfield pop of Blondie, Talking Heads, The B-52s, even Elvis Costello – all of whom took the punk ethos in their own directions.

What the US and UK did have in common was a sense of youth rising and rebellion. Certainly, in the UK, it is far too simplistic to blame the rise of punk on a hatred for prog-rock. It was a useful hook to hang their hatred on, but it was so much more than that. A revolt against parents, older siblings, boredom, and lack of opportunity. There was Bowie and Roxy, but McLaren's nascent punk world initially centred a love of teds, rock 'n' roll and rockabilly – before morphing into the infamous SEX. Fold in pub-rock and what you got from the Pistols and their disciples was out-and-out rock 'n' roll. The Clash were more radical with their songwriting, The Stranglers were organ-heavy, and the dub-reggae crossover made British punk eminently more interesting, but it wasn't until punk started to fade, marginalised to extremist sects that the "art" side started to make itself known. The bands of post-punk took punk's DIY attitude and mixed it with a darker, more challenging aesthetic that was openly political pulling musically from all sources, *avant*-jazz, funk, world music and of course electronica.

In the late '60s, young German musicians were still reeling from the repercussions of World War II and strove to cast off the shackles of the past – musically, socially and historically. And as with every great musical movement, krautrock was far from being one unified genre. Amon Duul provided the acid-rock, Neu! invented the ever-present motorik rhythm, Kluster were at the forefront of electronic experimentation, and then there's the undefinable genius of Can. These bands were popular with both the punk brigade, whose artistic influences ran deeper than their sound, and their successors, as the German vanguard influenced everyone from PiL to Joy Division and The Fall. And while the likes of Tangerine Dream and their futuristic soundscapes complemented the industrial music birthed by Throbbing Gristle, the German musicians also helped create another genre of music that was more electronic and infinitely glitzier in its approach.

Inspired by Kraftwerk and the more danceable disco sounds of Giorgio Moroder, diligent wannabe musicians built their synths from scratch across Sheffield Merseyside and Essex to generate their own versions of dystopian electronica. And much to the chagrin of those around him, it was the young London upstart Gary Numan who first brought this new form of music to the British charts. Most of the early synth bands had a combination of German music and Bowie in their heart, but as time went on synth-pop came to dominate the charts as bands like Human League, Heaven 17 and OMD started to see the appeal of having a Top 10 hit. With Bowie at the interface, his finger ever on the pulse, '80's *Scary Monsters And Super Creeps* drew the New Romantics, those gender-bending, art-driven Blitz Kids to the fore as the likes of Visage, Culture Club and Spandau Ballet collided with the synth bands to usher in an early '80s wave of what was initially a wholeheartedly artistic movement, but one which eventually veered off into a neo-liberalist wet dream.

By the turn of the decade, the musical landscape looked vastly different from 10 years before. But then so did the world. By '84, what mattered was money and wealth – community was a rude word, and the musical wheel was beginning to turn again as people were turned off by the superficiality of it all and started to look back. Over in LA, The Paisley Underground plied a love for psych music, as did the garage revival which saw acts like The Fuzztones playing '60s informed tracks to unsuspecting punk crowds. Over in the UK, the mod revival was still well underway after its '79 origins had morphed into the subtle jazzy soul of The Style Council. Echo & The Bunnymen covered The Litter's 'Action Woman' and The Smiths had clearly listened to The Rain Parade, but it all started to feel just a little bit familiar. Acid-house did usher in something new, even if the sentiment was a throwback to the sense of coming together from 20 years earlier – it wasn't called The Second Summer Of Love for nothing. But then along came Britpop – the greatest revivalist movement of recent times, which seemed to mark the end of something.

We openly acknowledge that this article only scratches the surface and that we have barely touched on the worlds of soul, funk, folk, jazz and electronica. There's an overwhelming amount of music to enjoy – some totally new in its approach, some comfortingly recognisable – and that's no bad thing. *Shindig!* loves the music of artists who wear their musical influences on their sleeves. But the years spanning '64 and '84 were unequivocally a golden age, unlikely ever to be repeated in terms of innovation and novelty. Onwards and backwards. S!

TURN OVER FOR THE FIRST OF OUR DEEP DIVES

1964

The Fairies in 1964. L-R: John Acutt, Dane Stevens (sitting), Wimps Weaver, John Alder and John Gandy

ON THE SPRITE TRACK

Hot on the Cuban heels of The Rolling Stones and The Pretty Things, 1964 saw the emergence of long-haired, untamed R&B acts, hell-bent on upsetting the establishment.

Exhibit A: THE FAIRIES

HUGH DELLAR unpicks the myths and legends surrounding Colchester's wildest sons

In 1884, the Essex city of Colchester was struck by the most devastating earthquake that the UK had experienced since the 16th century. Measuring 4.6 on the Richter scale and lasting around 20 seconds, it damaged over 1250 buildings, including almost every house in the nearby villages of Wivenhoe and Abberton, and affected settlements all the way up to Ipswich. While there were no immediate fatalities, the event shook the area to its core – and had the unsavoury and unwanted effect of bringing sightseers to the region, desperate to get a taste of the awful action, even if only retrospectively.

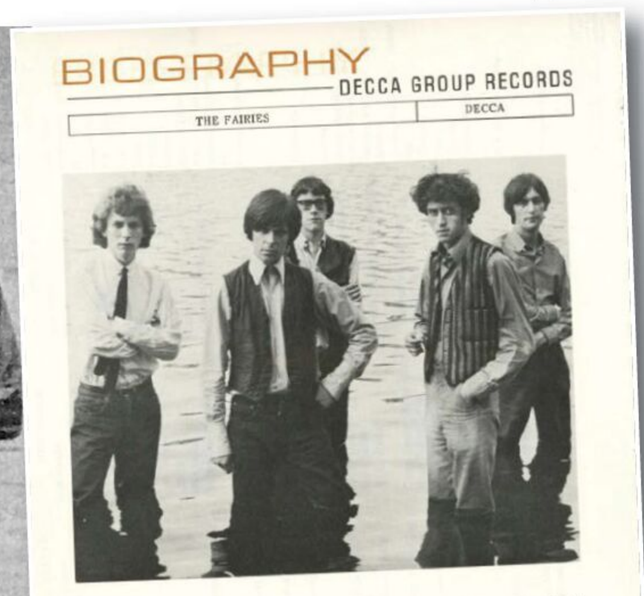
Fast forward 80 years, and Colcestrians found themselves shocked once more as both locals and visitors flocked in their droves to witness another disturbance of seismic proportions. This time, though, it was not an earthquake that hit the city, but a youthquake, and at its epicentre was a bunch of long-haired R&B fanatics who went by the knowing moniker of The Fairies.

For those of you unfamiliar with the slurs thrown at English men deemed to be anything from insufficiently macho to downright effeminate, here's a quick lesson in the kind of abuse anyone outside of the hetero-normative standards of the day would've had to endure back then: "You big girl's blouse! Sissy! Poof! Pansy! Nancy boy!" And, of course, "Fairy!"

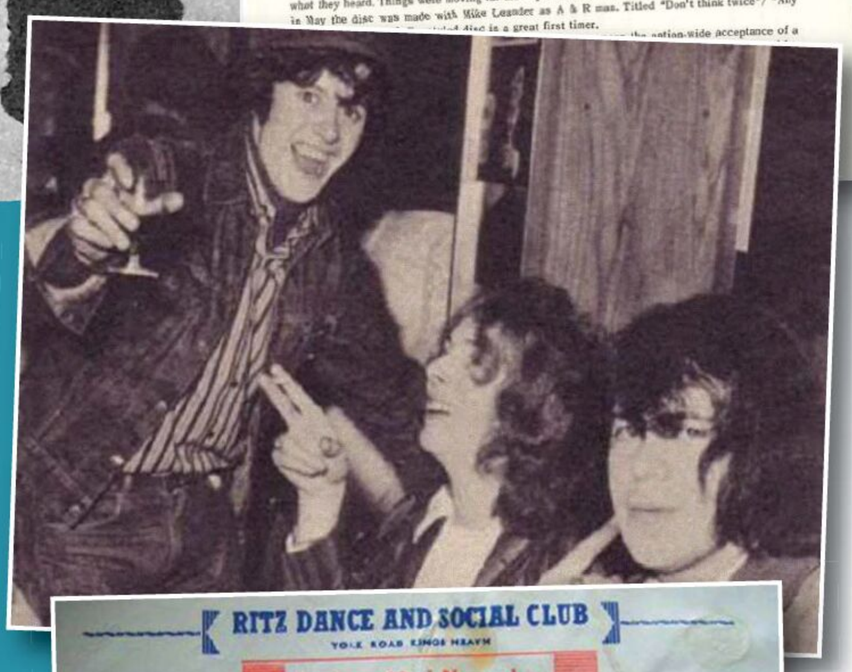
Colchester has long had a large local garrison and plenty of squaddies coming into the city centre at the weekend to fight and fuck. Back in 1964, just walking around with shoulder-length hair was enough to attract all manner of unwanted attention; but to do so whilst knowingly appropriating the names you'd get called on the street was potentially suicidal – and totally punk.

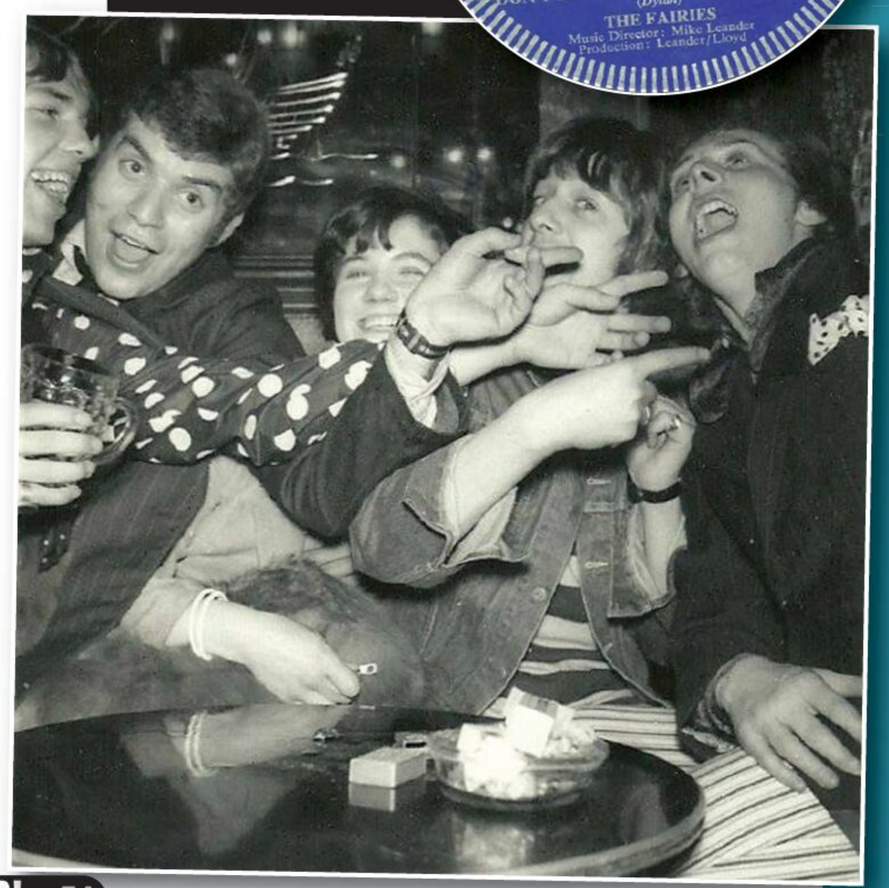
It hadn't always been this way, mind. Just a year earlier, while The Beatles were still asking permission to hold hands and the Stones were releasing Lennon and McCartney cast-offs, an earlier incarnation of the group had been plying its wares as the decidedly squarer Dane Stephens & The Deep Beats. The band were already causing waves on the local scene, but were also in a state of flux, gaining and shedding members with an alarming degree of regularity. Drummer John Adler – better known to readers as Twink – remembers his own point of entry. "I started out playing washboard in a skiffle group and then I bought a drum kit and played drums in the skiffle group for a while before joining an electric rock 'n' roll group called The Planets. We were doing Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran, Bill Haley kind of stuff. That soon folded and I ended up in Eddie Lee Cooper & The Trappers. Again, it was the same style of music – Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent and all that – and we were quite popular in the Colchester area. Some members of that group then drifted into Jimmy Pilgrim & The Strangers, and we had the same kind of success but were more of a Cliff Richard & The Shadows type thing because our singer Jimmy Pilgrim looked and sang like Cliff, so we used to do his songs and Shadows instrumentals and stuff.

"I was still in my teens at this point and eventually just felt it wasn't really working with the Strangers, so we agreed that I was going to leave and they'd carry on without me. I then had a brief period of about a week where I wasn't working



Getting wet for a Decca promo shoot and biography; 1964 debut single; on the town with friends (bottom left); Donovan, Alder and The Pretty Things' John Stax hit the clubs; The Fairies meet The King Bees, featuring David Bowie





"We played everywhere – literally from John O'Groats to Land's End. We were driving around the country in a van"
Twink

before Dane Stephens asked me to join The Deep Beats, who were an earthy rhythm & blues band. I guess the nearest thing they were doing to rock music was Chuck Berry. So that was that."

At first, the group had lead singer Dane Stephens (who was given the far more prosaic name of Douglas Ord at birth) doubling on piano, Ken Cauldwell on lead guitar, a rhythm guitarist whose name has been lost in the mists of time, John 'Freddy' Gandy on bass, a sax player called Malcolm Maloney and Twink on drums. Cauldwell was soon replaced by Mick Weaver (who was categorically NOT the same Mick Weaver who later became well-known in mod circles as Wynder K. Frog) and Malcolm Maloney quit soon after. Twink remembers that his departure was less to do with any musical differences, and more just a burgeoning fear of transport!

"What happened with him was he was holding down a straight job and doing gigs at the same time. One day he was driving and got really tired and had this crash and after that, he got the horrors about being on the road again, so he left."

Next up, the mystery rhythm guitarist vanished and was replaced by John 'Akky' Acutt, who'd played with Twink in The Strangers. As the new five-piece emerged from this turbulent six-month period, the Stones were starting to break big and young white English boys repurposing black American R&B were about to become the next big thing. Like countless other combos the length and breadth of the country, the band developed a formidable repertoire of cranked-up covers of songs by Jimmy Reed, Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, and so on, interspersed with the odd slightly jazzier cut and killer soul tracks like Major Lance's 'Um, Um, Um, Um, Um, Um'.

By early '64, the group were selling out clubs not only in their hometown but right across Essex, and it was at this point that they came to the attention of a certain Geoff Stephens. Along with local record producer Richard Lloyd, he went to see them at Colchester Town Hall and the next thing the band knew, they were being invited to do a session at the Decca studios in West Hampstead – a stone's throw away from the legendary Klooks Kleek club.

The band cut five songs, three of which – Fats Domino's 'Blueberry Hill', Gene Vincent's 'Be-Bop-A-Lula' and Fats Waller's 'Honeysuckle Rose' – were never released and remain lost to us today. Interestingly, they also suggest that the group hadn't yet transcended their roots in '50s rock 'n' roll. The remaining two tracks, however, formed the band's first 45, which was released on Decca in July '64.

The top side 'Don't Think Twice, It's All Right' came about because producer Mike Leander had a copy of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* with him in the studio and it's that rarest of things – an electric cover of an acoustic Dylan track that pips The Byrds to the post by a good few months. Along with half a million other cuts from these years, it also allegedly features a young Jimmy Page on lead guitar.

The real thrills are found on the flip, though. 'Anytime At All' was once assumed to have been a Dane Stephens original but was actually adapted from a Geoff Stephens demo. Incidentally, Stephens was pretty prolific, penning everything from 'The Crying Game' for Dave Berry to 'Winchester Cathedral' for The New Vaudeville band and 'Lights Of Cincinatti' for Scott Walker. Anyway, kicking off with a wailing harmonica and maracas way up in the mix, the track is two minutes 15 seconds of prime blistering punk R&B that rivals anything else from that year and presumably gives at least some sense of the sounds they were tearing up the club scene with.

As Twink recalls, it was as the 45 was slated for release that the name change became permanent. "Geoff Stephens had introduced us to an agent in London – a guy called Roy Tempest – to get us gigs.

The sponsorship deals start rolling in, 1965

Decca then decided that they were going to release this 45 and Roy wasn't too happy with the name Dane Stephens & The Deep Beats, so he tried to persuade us to use the name The Rattling Bones – for obvious reasons! We weren't impressed but did do one gig under that name. We had a conga player at this time who'd sometimes sit in. He wasn't really a member of the band, but we used to hang out with him. He was called Marsh – Swampy Marsh to us – and he was the one who suggested we call ourselves The Fairies. Our immediate reaction was "You must be joking!" but then we started to think about it and realised it might actually be a good idea, so it stuck."

Around this time, the band moved from the Essex hinterlands to the centre of the capital. "Our agent got us a flat in Paddington – Devonshire Terrace, to be precise – and so we all moved in there and started playing over the country," Twink explains. "We played The Cavern Club, we played everywhere – literally from John O'Groats to Land's End. We were driving around the country in a van and we had a car as well sometimes, so then we could stick all the gear in the van and we'd all go in the car, but mostly were just in the van."

At this critical juncture in the band's fortunes, though, tragedy struck. Returning home after two weeks on the road, Dane Stephens decided to take his family on a trip to the seaside in the band van – without telling anyone, and without a licence or insurance! On the way home, he nodded off at the wheel, and ploughed into another car, leading to fatalities. The law quite rightly threw the book at him, and he wound up in jail.

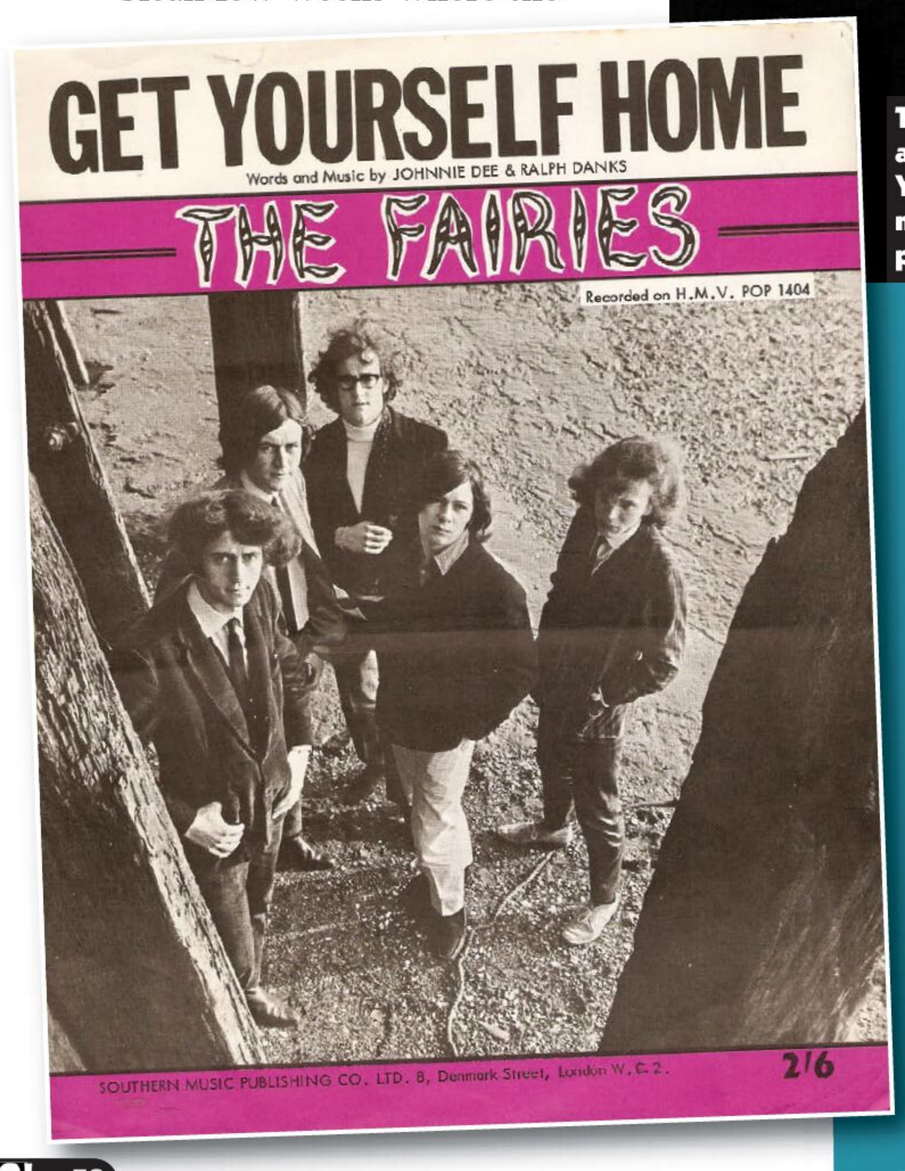
There then followed a rather bleak few weeks where the band were singer-less, and as Twink recalls, this impacted their living situation. "With Dane gone, we went through a really thin period. We weren't getting any work as word had gone out that we didn't have a vocalist. This meant we couldn't pay the rent, but luckily, the landlord was quite sympathetic and offered us a basement round the corner. It wasn't the greatest place to hang out in, but he was okay with us paying him when we could, Anyway, at that point, we were hanging out a lot with The Pretty Things and John Stax had just moved into a brand-new apartment in Red Lion Square. He invited me to take a room there, which I was happy to do as it got me out of the basement."

Hope springs eternal and rather than call it a day, the band then drafted in an almost like-for-like replacement for Dane Stephens – Nick Wymer, from Ipswich's foremost beat combo Nix-Nomads, whose 'She'll Be Sweeter Than You' is another of the year's standout howling harp-wailing R&B belters. Wymer himself remembers the dilemma the invite presented him with, "I'd met Twink once or twice before and he approached me and told me all about the work they'd got with The Fairies. I thought of the situation that Nix-Nomads were in at that time and I felt a bit sad about all that. Then I thought, 'Well, there's one or two of the guys that have girlfriends, and I can't see them wanting to move far' and I was into it, so I said, 'Yeah, why not?'"

The local reaction to this decision was violent and Wymer received threats and toilet paper and so on through the letterbox, so it was with some relief that he headed down to London and moved into band digs. Nix-Nomads disbanded shortly thereafter and Wymer was all geared up for the big time. However, yet again, the band were to find things weren't quite as rosy as they seemed.

Firstly, their agent dropped them, an event Wymer remembered well. "Roy Tempest was a right villain. He held us back from recording as he could obviously make more money from us touring. We were working eight nights a week – and getting paid for two!"

To rub salt in the wounds, shortly after that, all their gear was stolen. Around the same time, they were taken on by a new agency, Morrison Duncan, who were already looking after their mates, The Pretty Things. Somehow new equipment was procured and things seemed to be back on track. Bookings started flooding in again and the band were living the dream of every young musician. Again. "We were playing regularly and having a good time hanging out with The



The pop-art phase; second and third singles; 'Get Yourself Home' sheet music; Twink proudly parades his long hair, 1965

"The Who used to come and see us – Townshend and Moon, who'd always be out of his head with his eyes popping out"
Nick Wymer

Kinks, The Birds – who all looked like crows – The Pretty Things," laughs Nick Wymer. "Once, I was with Viv Prince when he opened a car door in Oxford Street and this van or bus came along and knocked it off! He lost a lot of car doors that way. It's a wonder they didn't lose him! The Who used to come along and see us –Townshend and Moon, who'd always be out of his head with his eyes popping out. Even David Bowie's Lower Third came down. Actually, as a person, he wasn't very nice at all. He was always copying people. One of the reasons I left London in the end was the falseness. Here was this guy from the sticks who wanted to be one of the boys –hanging around saying how he's going to make it. When we used to go off to gigs, the Lower Third would sometimes use our house and when we'd come back, we'd would find bits of equipment gone!"

Early in '65, the band were getting ready for their next release. The previous year, their road manager Johnnie Dee had written them a track called 'Don't Bring Me Down', which the band rejected because of the risqué lyrics, leaving it for The Pretty Things to turn into one of their definitive early statements. Having seen this track hit the Top 10, Dee decided to tout another song their way. The Pretties cut a demo of 'Get Yourself Home' but decided against releasing it and it then stayed in the can for almost 30 years! So it was that The Fairies got a stab at the track, cutting it in the basement of Southern Music in Denmark street for the princely sum of £15. Where the Pretties' take is very much in the style of their debut LP, The Fairies pushed it firmly into '65. The guitars are massive and drenched in reverb, the drums and tambourine crash and rattle and Wymer's vocal is a yelp of pent-up anguish. It's utterly brutal and the mid-song rave-up always threatens to career over into all-out anarchy. Cut at the same time was 'I'll Dance', a joint composition by the whole band, but credited to Wonderland – geddit! It's another searing slab of raw R&B and rocks like a beast. Despite its obvious quality, and an appearance on *Thank Your Lucky Stars* that has sadly not survived, their first HMV release didn't trouble the charts.

Despite the lack of chart success, according to Nick Wymer, the live shows were becoming ever more intense. "One place we played; I had all my rings stolen. People just pulled them off my hands because they were so sweaty. I also lost a shoe! People were jumping onto the stage. They were going berserk! We had to cut the show short after about two numbers and I got rushed off the stage into a car."

By now, the band were desperate for a hit and on the advice of their agents, they underwent an image change, appearing in *Fabulous 208* with shorter hair. They also released what was to be their final single that summer. 'Don't Mind' was written by Alan Hawkshaw, who the band knew from Emile Ford & The Checkmates. Cut again at Southern Music, it's a soul-influenced pop grower that marked a real change of direction. The soul influence is also evident on the flip, 'Baby Don't', which is cheekily credited to Wonderland again, despite being a stellar feedback-flecked mod pop-art reworking of Marvin Gaye's 'Baby Don't You Do It'.

The 45 got plenty of airplay and another long-lost appearance of *Thank Your Lucky Stars* followed, featuring the group miming outdoors in a park with fountains and statues, presumably to capture the full "fairies at the bottom of the garden" vibe! Chart success remained elusive, though, and by now, frustrations were boiling over. The band weren't happy with Morrison Duncan, feeling they represented too much of a threat to The Pretty Things for the agency to give them the push they needed. At the same time, they were also too reliant on cover versions.

Nick Wymer was the first to leave, going on to briefly front a post-Van Morrison band set up by Billy Harrison that also fleetingly featured both Viv Prince and Skip Alan moonlighting from The Pretty Things. Sadly, this was all too short-lived to lead to recorded proof of their powers.

On his release from prison, Dane Stephens then returned, but as Twink recalls, the spark had gone. "What he'd been through was quite heavy and traumatic and we didn't really have the buzz we'd had before. He'd put on a bit of weight inside as well. I finally left The Fairies because I was invited to join The In Crowd (the act responsible for the monstrous punker 'Things She Says'). It really hurt the guys in the band that I did leave because we were like brothers. We'd been through some really heavy times, but it just wasn't going anywhere, and I had this opportunity to move on, so I did." The Fairies stumbled on a while longer, whilst Twink ended up in London psych legends Tomorrow and then The Pretty Things, The Pink Fairies and beyond. Before morphing into Zion de Gallier and recording psych-pop gem 'Me' with Mark Wirtz, Stephens had a brief spell with Watford act Cops 'n' Robbers and their singer Brian 'Smudger' Smith may well have moved the other way, filling in with what was left of The Fairies. Freddie Gandy went on to join Bluesology alongside Long John Baldry and Elton John and was then in Sam Gopal and Hookfoot, and The Fairies passed into history until comped in the '80s and then revered by young beat freaks of the era such as myself.

Many thanks to Mike Stax and Ben Olins for allowing the use of material that first appeared in Ugly Things *and* Making The Scene, *and to Nigel Lees, Paul Orwell and Twink for photos and cuttings*

'You Win' / 'Willy Nilly' is out now on Solution

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

Four long-players that symbolise an alternate 1964

ALBERT AYLER TRIO

Spirital Unity (ESP-Disk)

Following in the footsteps of Ornete Coleman's revolutionary 1961 outing *Free Jazz*, this '64 set features Ayler playing with bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Sunny Murray and refines the spaces that were possible for jazz to move into. Not afraid of working with delicate, haunting melodies, but also quite able to let loose and howl and rage and speak in tongues through his instrument, Ayler was also an expert in flitting in and out of a song, leaving space in which his compadres could operate and making his sudden returns both welcome and all the more striking. So much further out than any pop album of the year and a benchmark for what was to come. *Hugh Dellar*

THE IMPRESSIONS

Keep On Pushing (ABC Paramount)

From the sharp suits and flash motor of the cover to the uplifting gospel-soaked positivity and optimism of the title track, this first real studio album by The Impressions is as vital a marker on the road towards Black pride and Black power as anything else from this crucial year in the fight for civil rights. It was also a massive influence on the flourishing UK mod scene. Curtis Mayfield's soaring, searing falsetto could move the dead. Johnny Pate's beautifully crafted horn arrangements and sweet aching harmonies all help to make this one of the classic soul albums of the era. *Hugh Dellar*

KARLHEINZE STOCKHAUSEN

Kontakte (Wergo)

Already (in)famous for his relentless innovations and pursuit of sounds beyond and having already put out a slew of ground-breaking recordings of electronic music and musique concrète in the '50s, by 1964 Stockhausen was exploring whole new modes of working. The result of over 700 pages of musical notation and half a year spent manipulating tape machines, this recording explores contacts between electronic and more traditional instrumentation – psychedelia way before the idea exploded into the popular consciousness. These are sounds from the void and Lennon and McCartney were surely listening carefully, plotting *avant-garde* routes forward through pop music. *Hugh Dellar*

THE YARDBIRDS

Five Live Yardbirds (Columbia)

Still revolutionary 60 years on, The Yardbirds' debut, a warts-and-all live effort following in the tradition of their blues heroes, recasts R&B for the British art school elite. Its musical sensibility of crescendo rave-ups and high-energy takes the blues into new realms, which would undeniably inspire the art-pop attack of The Who and later the psychedelic explorations of transatlantic acts like Grateful Dead. Listening now, it still sounds light years ahead of their contemporaries. Tracks stretching out for over five minutes was something that wouldn't catch on until the second half of the decade. Bottled lightning that's shaped so much of what was to come. *Jon 'Mojo' Mills*

1974

BIG

BOYS GOT IT BAD

They should have been kings of Memphis, and conquered America to become the young, fresh sound of 1974 – but life was never that simple for BIG STAR.

In this exclusive interview, founder member and mainstay JODY STEPHENS talks to MARTIN RUDDOCK about the tangled genesis and aftermath of *Radio City*

"Everything fun in my life – outside of family, my wife – the catalyst has been Big Star." Big Star in 1974. L-R: Andy Hummel, Alex Chilton, Jody Stephns

There's a lot happening on the rear sleeve of Big Star's *Radio City* LP. A candid snap by band friend Bill Eggleston, it's dated "January 1974" and shows the startlingly young trio of singer-guitarist Alex Chilton, bassist Andy Hummel and drummer Jody Stephens resplendent in their glam-cowboy finery, surrounded by friends on a big night out at regular haunt TGI Friday's, Overton Square, Memphis.

A wickedly grinning Chilton points down the barrel of the camera, his arm draped round Hummel. A wide-eyed Stephens has his hands on his thighs. Behind them an absolutely battered-looking man with massive sideburns and shades on indoors plays pinball with eyes to the ceiling. "It was a major hell-raising scene in those days. A deejay would play old 45s and just everyone came and stuffed the place," recalled Hummel. "Then we went over to Bill's later on and he suggested the light on the ceiling pic, which he had previously taken. We all loved it and I thought it fit perfectly with the sort of *avant-garde* nature of the LP." The band love Eggleston's cover shot of a light fitting on a tatty red ceiling with some framed erotica peeking into frame. Their distributors hate it. But after a strange, disjointed year, Big Star, an unsuccessful square peg cult-rock band in a soul town are ready. They're poised to capitalise on all those column inches they've collected from enraptured music hacks with a brilliant second album. It's surely got to be their year.

Flash forward to the late summer of '74, and a very different line-up of Big Star is fading out against the twilight backdrop of a small-town carnival. "I know we did this gig," Jody Stephens tells *Shindig!* "It was at a fairground, on the back of a trailer. It was almost a scene from a foreign film, with all these people trying to knock over milk bottles, playing ring toss, this grassy knoll in between and this stage that was a flatbed trailer. And the way it was lit was weird."

PHOTO BY WILLIAM EGGLESTON, EGGLESTON ARTISTIC TRUST

Stephens, Hummel and Chilton photographed for the cover of *Radio City*, 1974

It's late 2023 and Jody's on the phone from Memphis, from his workplace of Ardent Studios, where Big Star made their seminal trio of albums with engineer and mentor John Fry between '70 and '74. The last man standing of the original line-up, Stephens is still impossibly youthful – a calm, mellow presence.

We're here today to discuss brilliant sophomore album *Radio City*. A deep cut cult record from the second it spilled from the presses, its tangled history begins around November '72, when Big Star founder Chris Bell quit the band. Frazzled through juggling his studies and day job with round the clock work on their dazzling debut *#1 Record,* Bell was frustrated at its commercial failure and Ardent's business practices. Basically, a brilliant studio with its own cottage industry record label, erratically distributed through soul label Stax, Ardent struggled to get the band the exposure that they, and particularly Bell, yearned for. *"#1 Record* was so badly distributed by Stax," Alex Chilton told Martin Aston in a '92 interview. "They hadn't a clue. The same happened to *Radio City*. You couldn't buy it anywhere. We were making a record in an insulated environment. We rarely played live either, maybe two to three times with Chris and maybe 20 times afterwards."

Bell felt that Big Star, and particularly his songwriting partnership with Chilton was already collapsing as their first album neared completion. "There were terrible arguments in the band and it began to get very political and less musical," he told Barry Ballard for *Omaha Rainbow* in '75. "Alex had, in a sense, left and he was playing with some other guys while the album was still recorded."

"Alex had got together with Richard Rosebrough, an Ardent engineer," says Jody. "Alex, Richard and a guy named Danny did some recording and they recorded 'What's Going Ahn', 'She's A Mover' and 'Mod Lang'." Chilton dubbed his new, part time outfit The Dolby Fuckers after the singer noticed the noise reduction meter during a late-night session at Ardent and exclaimed, "What's this Dolby fucker do?" "That's the name they gave themselves when they stayed up all night at the studio getting high and recording," Hummel later recalled.

The Dolby Fuckers was a party band, with Chilton and Rosebrough crashing into Ardent and hitting record after alcohol and Quaalude-fuelled trips to Friday's. "It wasn't like a group or anything," Chilton told Bruce Eaton. "I mean, Richard would write this on the box of stuff that we would fuck around with but it was just odd things. It was Richard and me."

Bell delivered an ultimatum. "Chris kind of presented it to me in a way that if we would follow him away from the record company that we would stay together," said Chilton. "I was more interested in staying where we were. I hadn't really learned much about the recording studio, and I was very much interested in doing that." Former teen pop star Chilton liked the nurturing atmosphere and free reign he had at Ardent. After three years fronting The Box Tops, an abortive stab at reinvention as a folkie singer-songwriter in New York, and an unreleased solo album – Big Star was his fourth stab at the limelight. Bell also resented the focus on Chilton in the album reviews that were steadily trickling in, each marvelling that the kid from The Box Tops was all grown up.

Big Star briefly toured in late '72 to promote *#1 Record*, but the gigs were sparsely attended, and tensions increased. "One of the gigs was opening for Ann Peebles, kind of an odd pairing," recalls Jody. The band penned some strong new songs, but the increasingly erratic Bell, reached crisis point. A punch-up with Hummel led to one smashed bass guitar (Bell) and one stabbed acoustic (Hummel, in retaliation) before an enraged Bell attacked John Fry's car then attempted to erase the multi-tracks of *#1 Record*. Struggling with his mental health, Bell was hospitalised by his concerned parents.

Chilton claimed to be mystified by his songwriting partner's exit. "I didn't talk to Chris about it much because he was suddenly gone, but he never had any argument with us," he told Aston. The remaining trio of Chilton, Hummel and Stephens returned to Ardent around December '72 to record four new tracks with Fry. As a reaction to the extensive overdubbing of *#1 Record*, they recorded live, loud and in mono. "John was a brilliant engineer, and in a large part that's

Before the departure of Chris Bell (left); 1972 debut *#1 Record*

why those records stand the test of time, it's because sonically the way they sound," recalls Jody. "He said, 'Hey, why don't we do this: half-inch tape, just two-track'. All live. I always remembered those recordings as being some of my favourites." "It was the tightest, hottest music we'd ever done," Hummel told *Perfect Sound Forever* in 2001.

Despite Bell's absence, his presence was felt on the new songs, having co-written all four. The chugging 'I Got Kinda Lost' and keening 'There Was A Light' (both primarily Bell tunes) were later reclaimed by Chris for his solo sessions. Both celebratory and spooked out, the stunning 'Back Of A Car' was completed by Chilton and Hummel. "I think Andy wrote a good bit of the lyrics," says Jody. "Andy was good at capturing adolescent feelings I think."

And then there was the miraculous, funky 'O My Soul'. Chilton objected to one of Bell's couplets, "You're really a nice girl…" but left it in anyway. "Fuck! I would never say that!" he later snarked to Eaton. "I'd be more inclined to say, 'You're really a rotten person, but I like you anyway.'" Despite his lyrical misgivings, Alex conceded that "the demo tape sounded like a million bucks".

Considering Bell's walk-out, it's unusual that Big Star demoed his new songs and kept unloved lyrics by him in others. Were they keeping Bell's seat warm in case he returned? "We were carrying on, but it would have been wonderful for Chris to have come back," says Jody. "The whole reason Chris left the band was really because he was more interested in doing a solo thing. We weren't really divided as a band, it was just that Chris was stepping out from under the spotlight that was on Alex. There were no angry moments. So there was a friendly division of songs. 'I'll take these two and you take those two.'"

The tapes promptly disappeared, leaving Big Star back at square one. It was rumoured that Bell had swiped or wiped them. All four tracks have since been recovered and released officially. "I would imagine Chris stole them but I have no idea really," mused Chilton. "It would be quite like him."

In late January '73, the trio honoured a week-long engagement at Lafayette's Music Room in nearby Overton Square, next door to Friday's. One of the gigs was recorded by Fry, capturing the audibly nervous trio cranking out songs old and new with Stephens covering Bell's harmony parts and Chilton doing double duty on lead and rhythm guitar. The new songs from the demo were joined by the crunching Dolby Fuckers track 'She's A Mover', Hummel's anthemic 'Way Out West' (sung by Jody) and covers of The Kinks, T Rex, Todd Rundgren and The Flying Burrito Brothers. Ending on a raw, kinetic 'O My Soul', the band left the stage to muted applause. "We opened for Archie Bell & The Drells," laughs Jody. "You can tell the lack of enthusiasm from the audience. I mean, seriously, we had finished and one person would clap."

Big Star splintered after the Lafayette's shows. "The reason we broke up was because we played that week-long gig at a club that went awfully bad, and everybody got uptight," Chilton told *Circus*'s Jon Tiven in '74. "Andy thought we needed somebody else in the band, so I thought, 'To hell with it, then.'"

"It would have been wonderful for Chris to have come back. We weren't really divided as a band, it was just that Chris was stepping out from under the spotlight that was on Alex. There were no angry moments" JODY STEPHENS

Listening to the Lafayette's tape 50 years on Jody feels that the trio were hard on themselves. "I think they're a bit ragged, but there's something that just kind of transcends that. There's an energy there, it's spirited. It could be nervous, but the overall aura of that is a statement about who we are and what we were doing."

Chilton returned to Ardent – sometimes with The Dolby Fuckers, sometimes solo, cutting acoustic demos of 'What's Going Ahn', 'Life Is White' and Loudon Wainwright III's 'Motel Blues'. "We kind of drifted apart," reflects Jody. "Andy and I were both going to university. We both had girlfriends, I had to work, I always had a job. So I was busy."

Meanwhile, way out of town, the first stirrings of the cult of Big Star were underway. In February '73 *Rolling Stone* ran a belated rave review of *#1 Record* by Bud Scoppa. With music press interest gathering, Ardent planned to repress the album. Stephens credits this to the dogged efforts of Ardent's promo man John King, who combated Stax's inept distribution by mailing out copies of the album to every music scribe in his bulging address book. "He was the guy who was responsible for getting the records in the hands of these writers, and they listened. That's what kept us alive for a long time."

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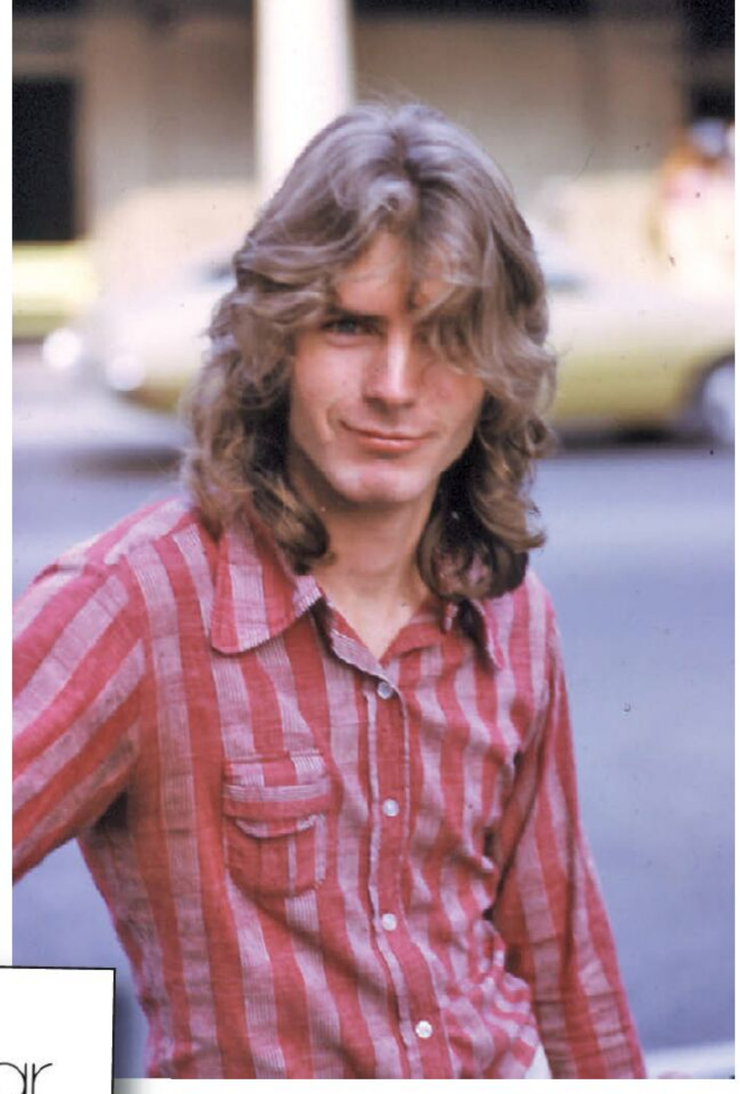
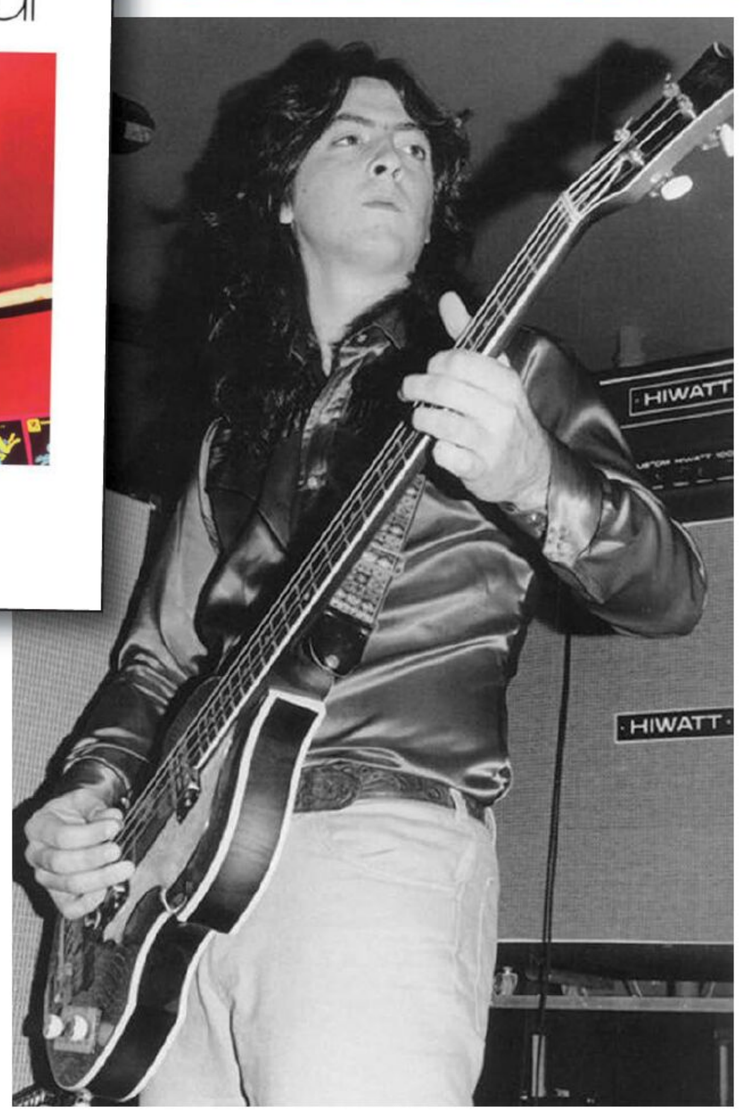
"For me, there was always an emotional connection."; Jody and Andy; 1974's *Radio City*





"John Fry always made me sound good. Now we were a three-piece his mixing philosophy changed, all three of us were almost featured artists so I could add a little more" JODY STEPHENS

Shortly afterwards, The Dolby Fuckers split just before a planned gig. "I had gotten a job for my new band," Chilton told Tiven, "and the band fell apart. So I called Andy and Jody and asked if they'd like to make it."

With the band tentatively back together, King masterminded an event that cemented their legend. The inaugural Rock Writer's Convention lured 140 of the finest rock hacks in the business to a three-day event that was largely a mass drinking competition. Funded by Ardent, the event climaxed with a show at Lafayette's with a largely forgettable bill, until Big Star took the stage and the place erupted. A slaughtered Richard Meltzer introduced the band with a yell of "Puke on your mama's pussy, it's Big Star!" "I think first and foremost, as a group, rock writers were the only Big Star audience out there," remembers Jody. "We were all probably nervous, but we all felt comfortable doing it. I mean, hell, even before we stepped on stage… that whole weird introduction that Richard Meltzer did…" It was their Free Trade Hall moment, and the band's sharp Anglophile powerpop sent the audience wild. "The scene that ensued after that went into the energy of the band and the experience," says Jody. "And then John King reconvened with Alex and was saying it would be a good idea to do another record. Which we did."

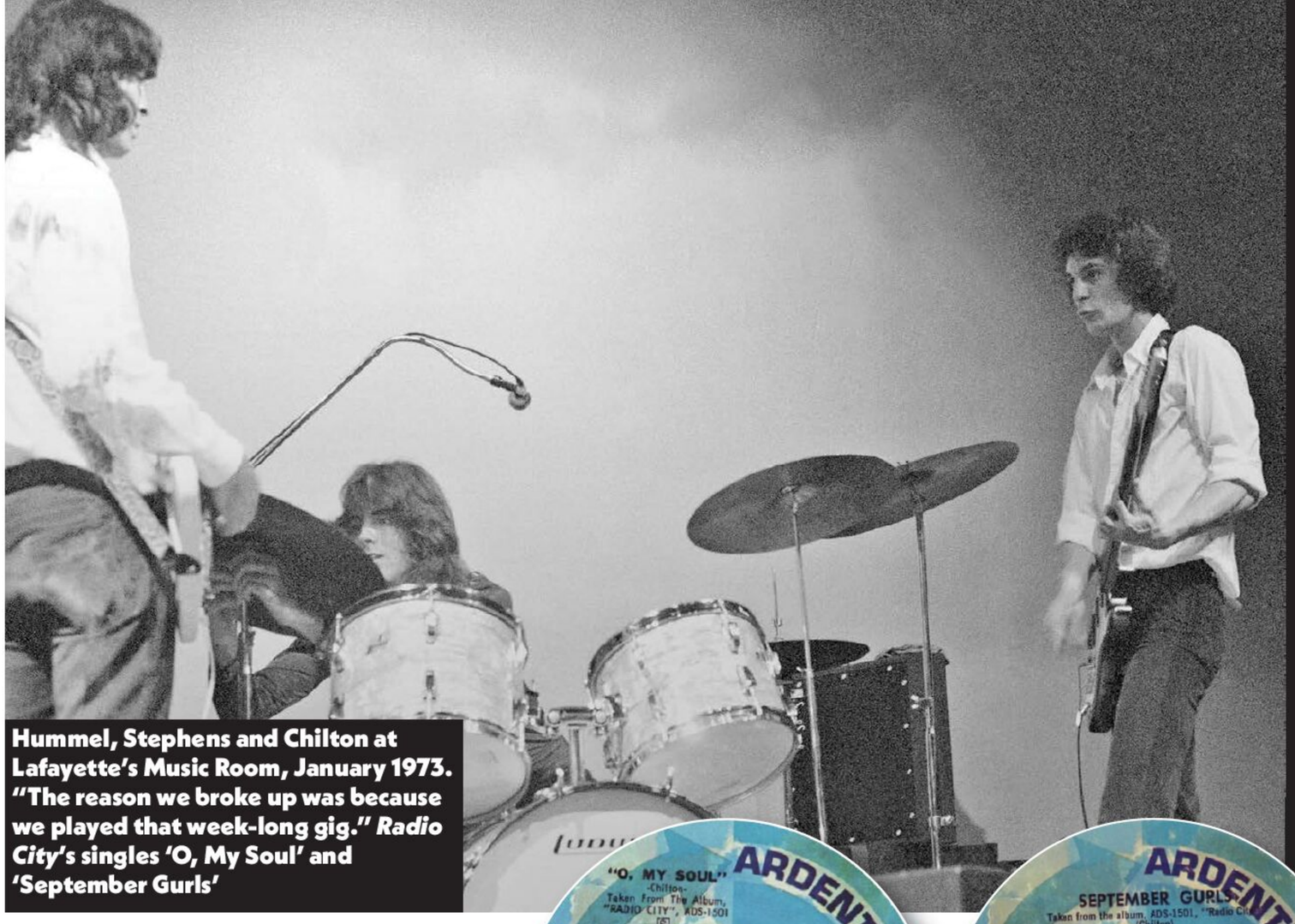
That summer, Big Star piled back into Ardent. Having learned from the painstaking gestation of *#1 Record*, they worked quickly. A remake of 'O My Soul' opened with a spacey instrumental with backwards-echoed slide guitar but lacked the impact of the lost demo. They nailed it with another take, cut and mixed in glorious mono at Fry's insistence.

The final 'O My Soul' was a five-plus minute duel of scything chucka-chucka Stratocasting from Chilton and avalanche-inducing fills from Stephens – with Hummel's swinging bass refereeing somewhere in the middle. Topped off with bursts of mellotron and a histrionic lead vocal, it screamed "hit single". Despite a clever single edit from Fry and some airplay, the eventual 45 failed to chart. "I gotta tell you, there was something that just worked," says Jody. Two days after we speak, he emails me just to enthuse about Hummel's bass part.

'Back Of A Car' was recut, augmented by inventive string-like overdubs from Chilton while Hummel, lead vocal-shy after his lead on 'India Song' the previous year, delegated the vocal to Jody. "I was lucky. He wasn't really interested in singing it, so he gave it to me. It felt great. A little timid, but it really opened the door to everything that happened since."

With Bell out of the picture, there was a more democratic sound and approach. "All of a sudden we're a three-piece, so each one of our roles changed," muses Jody, who nominates 'Life Is White' as his favourite track on *Radio City*. With big drums, wheezing harmonica and barrelhouse piano, it's a strident but deliciously bored brush-off from Chilton to ex-girlfriend Diane Wall in favour of 'Ann', AKA new partner Vera Ann Ellis. Both women were Librans, or 'September Gurls' to astrology nut Alex.

"I love 'Life Is White'," says Jody. "The



Hummel, Stephens and Chilton at Lafayette's Music Room, January 1973. "The reason we broke up was because we played that week-long gig." *Radio City*'s singles 'O, My Soul' and 'September Gurls'

drum sounds… John Fry always made me sound good. Now that we were a three-piece his mixing philosophy changed, all three of us were almost featured artists so I could add a little more. I had a new drum kit, an oversized Ludwig. I still have the kit and I still play it five days a week."

With limpid-sounding verses giving way to an anthemic, but utterly coal black double time coda (with Chilton wailing, "You're gonna die, you're gonna decease"), the unsettling 'Daisy Glaze' (with Hummel on pump organ) was a band co-write that distilled all the power, light and darkness Big Star could muster into something that still defies description 50 years later.

Without Bell's guitar hero licks, Chilton filled the space admirably. The kid who wasn't allowed to play on Box Tops records had blossomed into a fearsome player who often sounded like he was playing two parts at once – even without overdubs. "Alex had more space. You could really understand what a brilliant player he was," says Jody. "Probably my favourite solo was on 'You Get What You Deserve'. It's powerful, it moves you in the way you wanna be moved."

In later years, Chilton was often dismissive of his past work, even his choice of guitars – as Jody points out. "Later on, when we were touring with Jon Auer and Ken Stringfellow doing Big Star numbers, somebody asked about Fender Stratocasters and he said, 'Oh, they're mere toys.' That doesn't compute with me," he chuckles.

Chilton later stated, "I don't think there's one good song of mine on the record. To me the only good song on the album is Andy's ['Way Out West']." "I think sometimes he just liked to throw statements out to shake things up a little, being contrary just to throw that impression," suggests Jody. "To me the measure of a good song is how it connects with people. And Alex connected."

The band ended up using three Dolby Fuckers recordings, unable to recapture their unique feel. "We tried to match those and never did," says Jody. "So we wound up using those tracks on *Radio City*."

'What's Going Ahn' was all shifting rhythms, spook and nihilism – with Chilton making an anthemic chorus out of "I resent everyone / Ever since I was young". "'What's Going Ahn'? Wow," says Jody. "Richard Rosebrough was brilliant at very slow, heavily, profoundly emotional drumming. The acoustic part that starts that, it really pops, it's just mind-blowing. And then you go onto the actual lyrics, the emotion, the sound of his voice. Those songs are impactful to me. For me, there was always an emotional connection."

'Mod Lang' (Memphis Nadsat for 'Modern Language') was a droog-ish salute from one Alex to another. Chilton didn't bother writing lyrics for his filthy glam boogie, telling *Sounds*' Sandy Robertson in a '77 interview that "all the words were stolen from blues songs, we took one line from each song".

'She's A Mover' was a brutal Kinks-y boogie given added weirdness by Chilton applying massive compression to Rosebrough's drums, making them almost sound reversed. Hummel recorded over Jones's bass part, anchoring it amongst the whooshing drums and tape spool noises.

The deathless 'September Gurls' was written and recorded late in the sessions, an ode to various on-off Libran girlfriends by Alex, a "December Boy" who had it bad. Its huge chorus and keening hooks hung around enigmatic lyrics, big chords and cavernous drums. After meeting Roger McGuinn in New York in '70, Alex returned to Memphis having

TOO LATE TO CHANGE THE TIME

Four albums that portray an eclectic 1974

Black Oak Arkansas

Street Party (ATCO)

Southern rockers Black Oak Arkansas were a big mid-70s concert draw but, perhaps thanks to singer Jim Dandy Mangrum's challenging vocal technique, only so-so album sellers. *Street Party,* their sixth, delivers their usual blend of triple guitar treats ('Son Of A Gun', 'Hey Y'All'), back to the land longing ('Goin' Home') and hairy mountain man funk ('Sting Me'). *Peter Gallagher*

The Meters

Rejuvenation (Reprise)

Long at the forefront of New Orleans funk, The Meters' fifth studio album proved they had the sophistication required by the latest generation of music lovers. With Mardi Gras, R&B, country and gospel influences, its benchmark grooves would reverberate down the years, providing cover material for Red Hot Chili Peppers and samples for the likes of Public Enemy. *Duncan Fletcher*

Randy Newman

Good Old Boys (Warner Bros)

The fourth studio album from the Californian singer-songwriter found him applying his characteristic wit and musical wisdom to a collection of songs inspired by life in The Deep South. Despite tackling subjects such as slavery and politics, the lush sounding record became his most successful to date. Inexplicable flop single 'Louisiana 1927' is a breath-taking, gut-wrenching song about the floods, but that won't stop it being stuck in your head for days. *Andrew Ure*

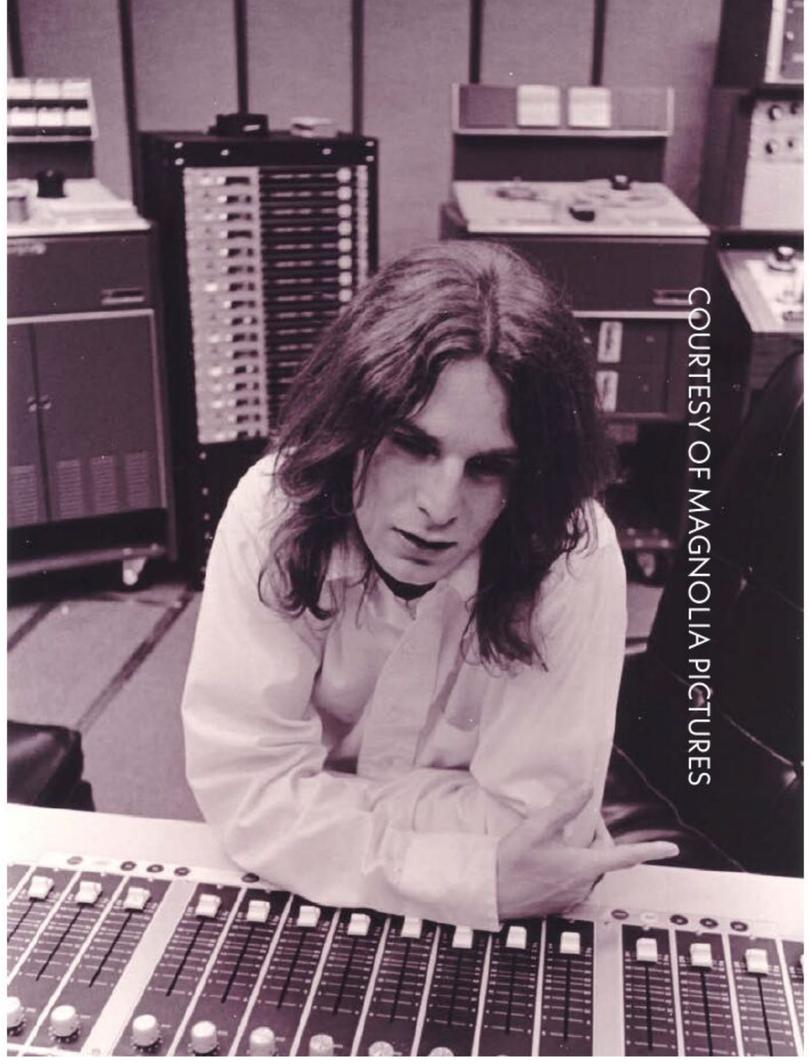
Badfinger

Wish You Were Here (Warner Bros)

Big Star and Badfinger's paths came close to passing in March 1974, just before the UK quartet began recording its sixth album at Caribou Ranch in Colorado. With Chris Thomas behind the desk and the strongest set of songs since '71's *Straight Up*, Badfinger unashamedly summoned the Beatlesque powerpop that had lain dormant in their recent work to fashion a powerhouse set that remains many fans' favourite to this day. *Andy Morten*

Bassist John Lightman (left) joins in 1974; Alex pores over the mixing board

"I don't think there's one good song of mine on *Radio City*. To me the only good song on the album is Andy's ('Way Out West')"
ALEX CHILTON



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absorbed some of the head Byrd's vocal mannerisms. Now Chilton channelled McGuinn again with an expressive solo played on a Vox Mando guitar compressed to within an inch of its life.

Rounding out the album were two short songs. The mysterious 'Morpha Too', performed on piano with spooky, upside-down harmonies – and 'I'm In Love With A Girl', a simple, direct, almost teenage solo Alex performance.

As Chilton and Fry finished up *Radio City*, Hummel weighed up his future. "With Chris gone and no money coming in towards the end, I began to become more than a little disillusioned," the bassist later recalled. "By the time they were mixing the LP I was pretty well out of the picture." The band saw out '73 with a rare out of town engagement in New York. "We played Max's Kansas City, we played two or three nights there. That was a lot of fun," says Jody.

In January, after the *Radio City* cover shoot, Hummel quit. "I think Andy saw the writing on the wall that we weren't gonna make a career of this," reflects Jody. "He wanted to get his life underway, so he went back to school." Chilton recruited bassist John Lightman, whose busy Jack Bruce-like style helped fill the void left by Hummel's departure. "A great bass player and perfect for a three-piece. Different from Andy," says Jody.

Radio City was released in February, to immediate rave reviews. "Already, the album of the year is upon us," Tiven wrote in *Zoo World*. But copies piled up in the corridors of Ardent and at Stax's warehouse. "Al Bell had done a distribution deal with Clive Davis at Columbia, and Clive got fired very shortly after that," says Jody. "Nobody really was interested in honouring that deal he did with Stax, and our distribution suffered." It fell to Fry and King to spread the word, personally mailing the LP out to record stores and interested parties.

Despite their dented morale, Big Star stepped up the gigging. "When we did get together to do gigs, I loved playing with Alex because of that spark between us. I wasn't too caught up in anything outside the two of us getting together," says Jody. The band travelled to New York on 13th March for a run of shows at Max's, heralded again by superfan Tiven who wrote, "BIG STAR IS America's premier rock band, hands down" in *Fusion*. Rehearsing a tight set at Ultrasonic Studios on arrival, they immediately played a memorable live broadcast on FM station WLIR.

Deejay Jim Cameron found Chilton on prickly form. Asked about life on the road with The Box Tops, Alex bluntly replied, "Pretty scummy. Not as scummy as now." Asked what he'd been up to since, he retorted, "Here we are now on Long Island. That's what's happening." When quizzed about Big Star's melodic, "anachronistic" music he shut Cameron down. "I'm just doing what I like to do, and it sounds melodious to my ears."

A three-week swing through the Northeast, Ohio and Michigan began in late March. In Cambridge, Massachusetts they opened for Badfinger, but road manager John Dando found they'd been ripped off on the morning of the gig. "He brought all the gear up to Boston in a van and trailer," recalls Jody. "The next morning the van was gone. They'd left my drums behind but they got the guitars and amps. We wound up borrowing gear from The Sidewinders, Billy Squier's band. The first show I remember being a little shaky, but I remember the second being pretty amazing."

The two giants of powerpop didn't really cross paths in the end. "Badfinger had just got back from Japan. For some reason we had to leave so I didn't see their set after our first set. Didn't meet them. I was a bit too intimidated. For some reason didn't feel like it would be a good experience."

The new look Big Star continued to gig through the spring. By now there was an edgy, proto-punk feel creeping in, largely down to Chilton, whose recreational drinking and use of downers was becoming more routine. Scratchy covers of Kinks and Velvet Underground tunes entered their sets. Chilton almost abandoned a gig in Syracuse when he found out it was another live radio broadcast. The band was fired and then rehired from a run of shows in Michigan. They were captured on form for a hometown show at Overton Park Shell (released in '99 by Norton Records as *Nobody Can Dance*), but more change was afoot.

In early '73, Chilton had rejected Hummel's suggestion of getting a second guitarist. By May '74, he was feeling the strain of being sole guitarist. Various players including Van Duren were tried out, but Duren failed to hit it off with a cranky Chilton. "We brought on this other guitar player, Evan Leake," says Jody. "He was a killer guitar player, inspired a lot by Billy Gibbons, and John Lightman was a great bass player, but they were so stylistically different to Andy and Chris that it was getting further away from what we were in the beginning."

Jody either wasn't available or sat out Big Star's last known gig at a school near Millington Tennessee in September '74. "Wow! I don't remember that," he ponders. Chilton, Lightman and Leake were joined by dep drummer Bill Marshall from the band Target for a desultory performance marred by somebody making off with Marshall's snare. A morose Chilton told Lightman, "Music. I could take it or leave it," and the shocked bassist promptly quit.

It wasn't over yet for Big Star. The messy, contentious sessions for *Third* started that month – even working out the final tracklist of that torn and frayed masterpiece deserves a story of its own. But the crazy creativity, immortal tunes and hard knocks of '73-74 gave the band, and the world, so much more than it knew it had at the time.

"Everything fun in my life – outside of family, my wife – the catalyst has been Big Star," Jody, closes, touchingly. O, My Soul. S!

With many thanks to Jody Stephens, Andy Morten and Huw Thomas

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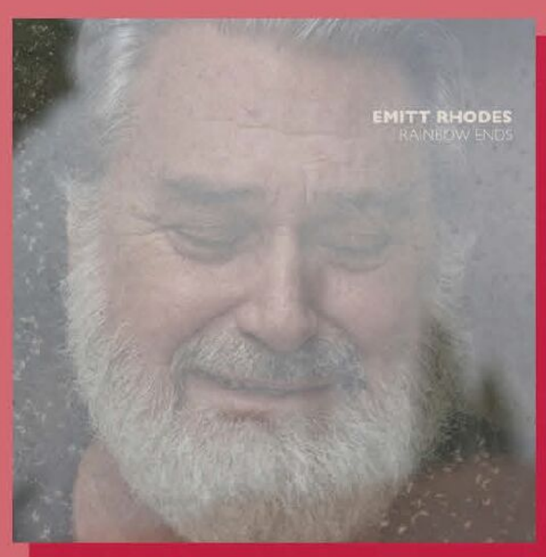
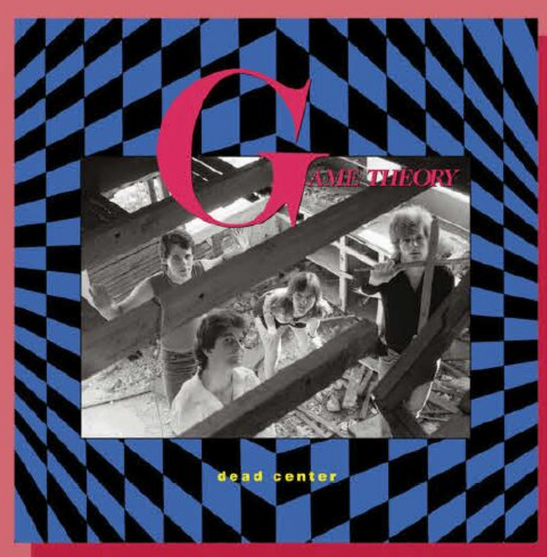


EMITT RHODES – RAINBOW ENDS
CD / LP / DIGITAL



GAME THEORY – DEAD CENTER
CD / 2-LP / DIGITAL

1984

Posing For Pictures. Plasticland circa 1987. L-R: Victor Demichei, Glenn Rehse (back), John Frankovic (front), Daniel Mullen; early self-released 45s (opposite)

COLOR APPRECIATION

WITH THEIR LYSERGICALLY-INCLINED LYRICS AND BOLD '60S-BASED SOUND, PLASTICLAND SET THE PACE FOR THE PSYCHEDELIC REVIVAL OF THE '80S.

NOW, WITH A NEW ALBUM ON THE HORIZON, FOUNDER GLENN REHSE TELLS CHAIM O'BRIEN-BLUMENTHAL ABOUT THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

"Plasticland is a group built on different phases," vocalist, guitarist and founding member Glenn Rehse explains. And while he may have meant that in a historical sense, it also applies sonically as well. From their beginnings nearly 45 years ago, Plasticland have evolved and experimented, whilst always staying true to their psychedelic roots. With a new album on the horizon (their first in 17 years), Rehse took the time to expound on the band's history and its future.

Growing up in rural Wisconsin, young Glenn Rehse's life was changed, like so many teenagers, by The British Invasion. "Dave Davies was the first cutting-edge guitarist I paid attention to," he recalls. Paying attention to pop radio, English influences began to seep in. "By 1966, there was some good stuff that started to appear on AM Radio, interesting sounds from overseas." With a budding interest in the new music from Europe, Glenn knew he had to hear more. "There weren't record stores in Wisconsin that carried these bands, groups like The Pretty Things. So, I'd order the records by mail from England, all these imports by these exciting new bands." By the time he reached high school, Rehse was playing in bands. "Hearing these cutting-edge groups got me interested in playing music," he states, "and trying to achieve some of these sounds. I started playing guitar, and as time went on, decided to get an organ and learned to play bass."

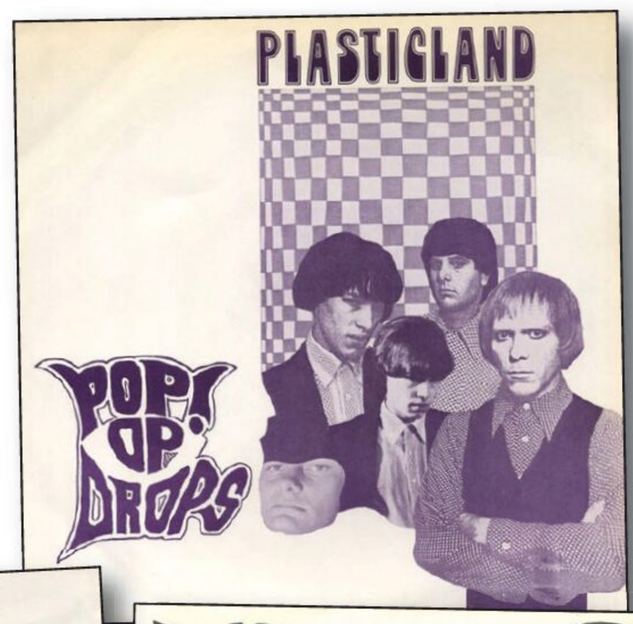
With the new psychedelic musical currents in the air, came a sense of lyrical experimentation, and Rehse was quick to pick up on the changing tides. "I'd taken piano lessons early on, and became interested in writing my own songs, being influenced by what I was listening to."

Hearing some of the local Milwaukee garage bands of the time also gave Glenn a sense that he could start a group too. "I didn't get the chance to see many of the local groups, but I enjoyed listening to their records. Groups like The Baroques, who had a great album on Chess. The Robbs were another popular local group."

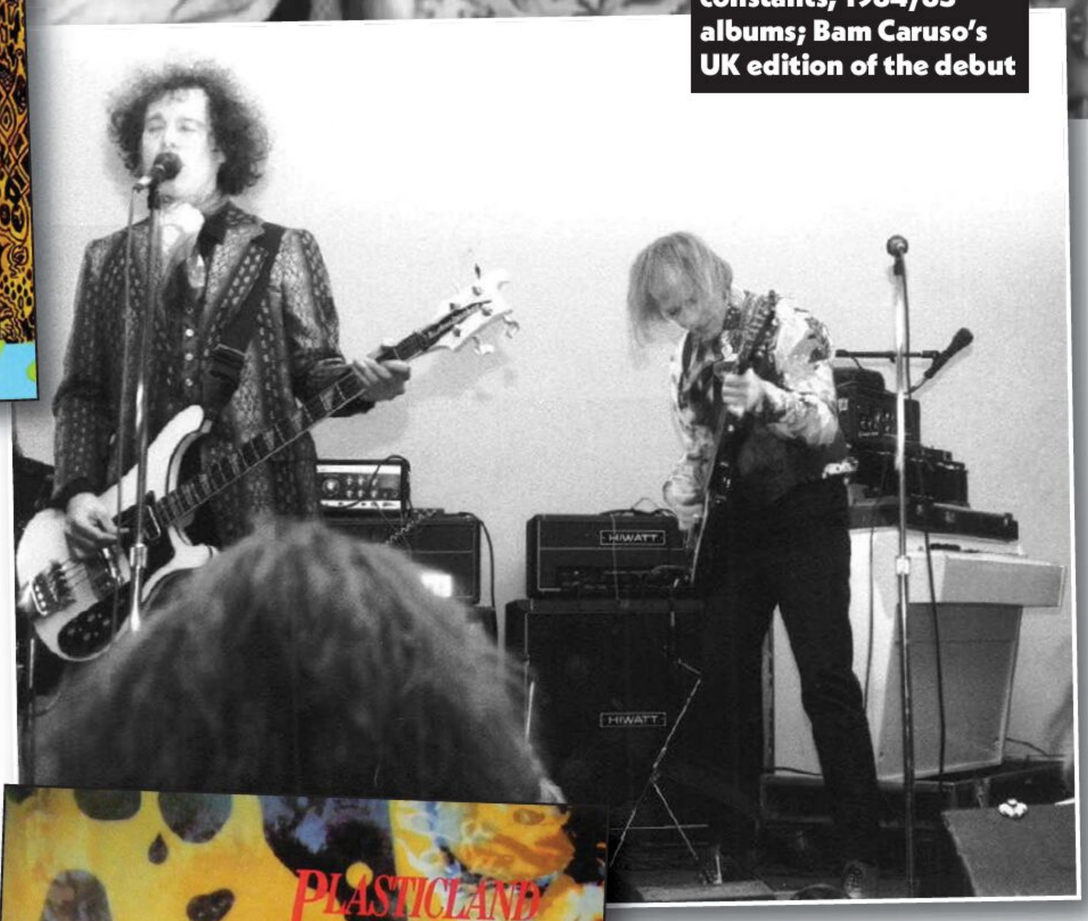
By the '70s, Rehse had played in several local groups, meeting fellow musician John Frankovic along the way. Playing together in the band Arousing Polaris, the duo realised they shared a love of the same '60s psychedelia and freakbeat. When that band folded in mid-79, Glenn knew he wanted a change in sound. "I wanted to go back to the garage, back to the music that first got me interested in forming a band. I mean, all those records on *Nuggets* I grew up listening to as a kid on the radio. I wanted to go back to that and bring in English influences as well." Even 40 years later, it's clear the vision the two had.

"We wanted to do an overview of our influences from '65 through '69." With that in mind, the duo started bringing on musicians and before long, Plasticland was a reality.

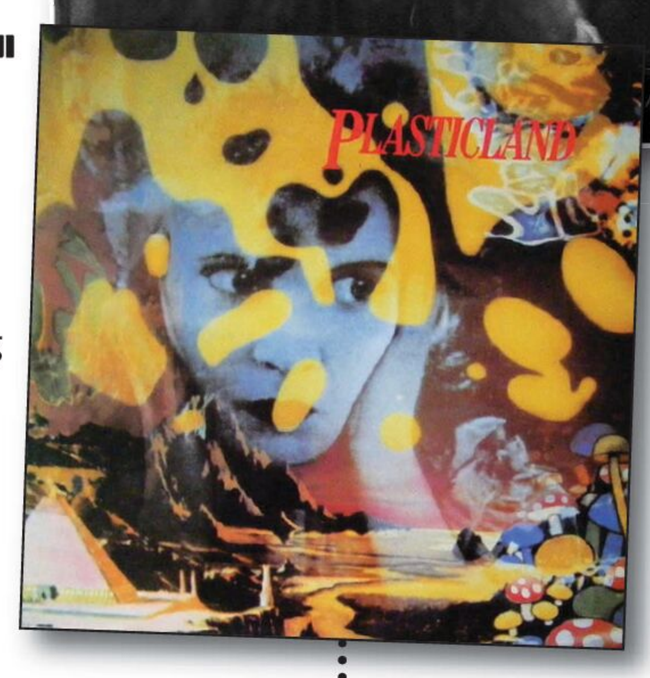
At the dawn of the '80s, with the



Various iterations of Plasticland with Rehse and Frankovich the constants; 1984/85 albums; Bam Caruso's UK edition of the debut



"ALL THOSE RECORDS ON NUGGETS I GREW UP LISTENING TO ON THE RADIO. I WANTED TO GO BACK TO THAT AND BRING IN ENGLISH INFLUENCES AS WELL"



garage-rock revival yet a defined scene, paisley-tinged bands found themselves playing whatever venues were available to them. In Milwaukee, the punk and new-wave scene was thriving, and Plasticland, while not fitting in with those groups, found themselves often on similar bills. "We usually tried to get headlining spots, but would open for punk acts. We opened for X. I remember us also opening for John Otway, and the guitarist in his band was Steve Bolton, who had previously been in Atomic Rooster. We all loved that group, and were big Crazy World Of Arthur Brown fans, so we would ask him all these questions about playing with Vincent Crane!"

Beyond live shows, the band was also steadily recording, and in '80 released their debut single 'Mink Dress'. "We formed our own label [Scadillac], to release our singles." Their second single, the now-classic 'Color Appreciation' backed with the psychedelic 'The Mushroom Hill', showed even more of their English influences. "Those songs were heavily influenced by The Creation and The Smoke. We were big fans of those bands, then and now." By this point, the band line-up had changed a bit, and soon to be famous local musician entered their ranks. "Brian Ritchie joined us briefly," Rehse recalls. "He stayed long enough to record that single and play three gigs." Ritchie would soon go on to form Violent Femmes with fellow local musician Gordon Gano.

Plasticland, however, continued recording and performing, releasing single after single to an ever-growing fanbase.

By the middle of the decade, with the garage revival and Paisley Underground scenes in full swing, it only seemed natural that Plasticland would get an album deal. "John Frankovic ran a small distribution and, after seeing our EPs doing well, went to Paris with a stack of our singles and arranged a deal with Lolita Records for us to record an album, which is why it came out in France first." That album, '84's self-titled debut, introduced Frankovic and Rehse's lyrics and the group to a new legion of psychedelic rock fans. "There was a lot of creative energy recording that record," Glenn recalls. "Despite it being a compilation of sorts, with our earlier [*Pop-Op-Drops*] EP."

Regardless of that, their label wanted some last-minute changes "[Lolita] wanted us to add two cover songs to the album. 'Alexander' was an easy choice, but for the second one, I wanted to use something that hadn't been covered before. I had this single ['Magic Rocking Horse'] by Pinkerton's Assorted Colours, and I said, 'Let's do it as if The Creation or The Smoke were covering it.' And that's what we came up with."

With success for the band in Europe, Enigma Records signed them to their psychedelic label Pink Dust, releasing the album stateside. With the garage revival scene getting bigger, Plasticland found themselves getting play on college radio, and touring the East Coast twice. "We did two tours from [Milwaukee] to New York," Glenn remembers. "We played CBGBs in NYC, and Folk City on a bill with The Fuzztones. Plasticland also appeared on [local NJ TV's] *The Uncle Floyd Show*." By the time it came to record their second album, Enigma made a wise suggestion. "They recommended we use

[45 Grave and Dream Syndicate guitarist] Paul Cutler to produce," Glenn remembers. "John and I went off and wrote a bunch of new songs, and the sessions were great. [Cutler] was a lot of fun to work with, real free spirited, a great guy with a fantastic sense of humour." If anything, the group was too prolific, with a number of songs not making the cut for the album. "We wanted a sort of theme to the album, and not all the songs fit. There were quite a few that got left off the album and ended up on our *Mink Dress* compilation."

As with many bands, Plasticland soon found themselves butting heads with their label. "We had toyed with the idea of making [*Wonder Wonderful Wonderland*] a double 10-inch set, which Enigma didn't like. They didn't think it was marketable enough." After third album *Salon*, Plasticland left Pink Dust but weren't without a label for long. "We knew JD [Martignon] who ran Midnight [Records, label and record store], and he offered to put out our *Confetti* album, which was a live record." Around this time, the band had the opportunity to work with a '60s psychedelic legend: the one and only Twink. "Naturally, we were huge fans of The Pretty Things and The Pink Fairies, so when we heard he was coming to Milwaukee, I offered for him to stay at my house and we wrote a couple of songs together, and made some recordings." Fellow musician and Dimentia 13 member Brad Warner contributed to those sessions and remembers them well. "I was amazed that they were from Wisconsin, as I was from Chicago, and assumed Plasticland were European! Certainly not from America, and not the Midwest. Glenn invited me to play with Twink and the band, and I did the solo on '10,000 Words In A Cardboard Box', which was my favourite song of Twink's." Despite the great creative relationship between the former Pink Fairies member and Plasticland, things eventually soured, however. "We recorded two songs, which never came out as a single, just a test pressing," Glenn confides. "[Twink] left and wouldn't let the single come out. I think he had higher expectations of the record labels than what they were."

By the dawn of the '90s, music scenes were changing, and with the influx of grunge bands, Plasticland seemed like more of an anomaly than ever. Glenn Rehse admits it was a tough time, keeping the band going. "Things were very sporadic. We weren't being given the chance to grow. Dan Mullen had left, as he was in other bands, and couldn't afford the time and energy to put into the group. And it got to the point where we were running through old material over and over, not exploring new sounds."

With Plasticland cooled, Glenn worked on other projects, including producing two albums for fellow psychedelic experimentalists Dimentia 13. Lead member Brad Warner recalls working with Glenn warmly. "He really pushed me to be better, working with me a lot on vocals, and pushed me in terms of my guitar playing. He taught me a lot about how to be a more professional musician." And with the group having been around a decade, Plasticland's influence began to seep into newer artists' music "[St John Society's Children] was influenced by them, as was 'Arousing Polaris', which I wrote as my little tribute to Plasticland," Warner remembers fondly.

With Plasticland on hiatus, Glenn Rehse continued making music into the '90s with his Fabulon Triptometer project. "For the first two albums, I played guitar. But I had a band of great guitarists and wanted to showcase their talent within the framework of the band, so I stuck to just vocals. We wrote a whole bunch of material." Other members continued to make music as well, with Frankovic and Victor Demichei forming The Gothics. Still, Plasticland was never far away in their memory, and eventually the flow of new musical ideas, coupled with a rabid fanbase, meant that a reformation was all but certain. In 2001, the Cavestomp! Music festival in New York City came calling, and for the first time in years, the band was back together. "We enjoyed doing those shows, they were a lot of fun," Glenn says.

After their reunion concerts, Glenn got the idea to bring Plasticland back in the studio. "I've always been writing, and I had song ideas that were in a backlog, that needed to come out. So, it seemed natural to do another Plasticland album." With the band reformation came lineup changes, the biggest one being when founding member John Frankovic left in 2008. "[John's] had health issues and is currently out of commission. We brought in Dave Raeck on bass, and Leroy Buth on guitar, and they've been in the band ever since." It only took 17 years, but the latest Plasticland album is mixed and ready to be unleashed on an awaiting public. Glenn mentions having just received the final mixes himself. "It's time for people to listen and catch up with where we're at. We're really excited to get new music out on record again." As for the proposed title *Spree*? "When we had the opportunity to go back in the studio, we went on a creative spree!"

With the new album in the pipeline, could there be more Plasticland shows in the future, even a tour? "There's nothing planned," states Glenn. "We haven't played in a while, but we'll see how the new album is received. We're not getting any younger, so we have to take that into account as well." One of their most recent shows was when Plasticland was inducted into The Wisconsin Music Hall Of Fame in 2015. "That was nice, being appreciated as a classic group of entertainers from our local scene." S!

With thanks to Glenn Rehse, Brad Warner, Arnald Paul and Robert Schaad

DANGEROUS TIMES

A SIDEWAYS GLANCE AT 1984'S LONG-PLAYERS

CLANNAD

Legend (Virgin)

Just as Brian Wilson and The Beatles changed how the studio was used and later progressive musicians ran with it, Irish folk siblings Clannad had continued to move with the times from their 1973 debut, embracing rock, prog and new-age influences. What was essentially the music from the ITV series *Robin Of Sherwood,* perhaps the last great TV show of its kind, which brought in paganism and magic to the lore (with the cast looking like renegades from The Battle Of The Bean Field), Clannad applied all of the latest studio tech to folk inspired songs that recast the past in MIDI. There's a Radiophonic feel to much of this, and latter-day synth folkies like Gwenno have clearly taken note. *Jon 'Mojo' Mills*

THE PALE FOUNTAINS

Pacific Street (Virgin)

When the Paleys emerged blinking from the shores of the Mersey with their debut album the world wasn't quite ready for their blend of brass-kissed Bacharach-influenced sophisticated pop. Head brothers Mick and John channelled Love, bossa-nova and '60s jazz, taking a large record company advance and the start of a rollercoaster journey that result in the fully realised Shack and Mick still performing with The Red Elastic Band, his talent still burning as bright as ever. *Simon Norfolk*

THE BANGLES

All Over The Place (Columbia)

Positioned both chronologically and stylistically between their self-titled indie debut EP (faithful odes to *Nuggets*-era garage) and international breakthrough *Different Light* (polished, airwaves-friendly pop/rock), *All Over The Place* sees The Bangles tackle The Merry-Go-Round's 'Live' and Katrina & The Waves' 'Going Down To Liverpool' alongside nine originals including strident powerpop banger 'Dover Beach', throwback pop-punker 'Tell Me' and a sign of things to come on orchestrated closer 'More Than Meets The Eye'. The harmonies already sound great, the gated snare slightly less so. *Andy Morten*

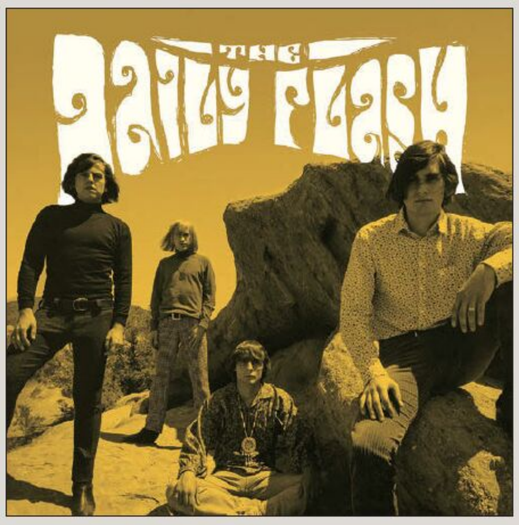
THE TELEVISION PERSONALITIES

The Painted Word (Illuminated)

Album number four from Dan Treacy's aggregation takes us deep into his haunted dreams and fragile state of mind. Long-gone are the happy-go-lucky mod-pop tunes on what is essentially a comeback album, the band having broken up two years previously. Its reputation would gain momentum as the decades passed and despite it sometimes being an uncomfortable and stark place to visit we'd recommend that you go there and wallow in the despair and magic of a band close to self-immolation. *Simon Norfolk*

Diamonds In The Rough

MIKE FORNATALE is dazzled by a West Coast folk-rock powerhouse that has lurked in the shadows for far too long



THE DAILY FLASH

The Legendary Recordings 1965-1967

★★★★★

GUERSSEN CD/2-LP

If you were to measure '60s artists on the basis of how many different ways (and different times) they came achingly close to The Big Time, without ever getting there, there's a fairly good chance that The Daily Flash would be on your list. If you add in the factor of their remaining virtually unknown (save for the occasional name-check without any of the actual music being heard) then they would *definitely* top your list.

Maybe that'll change now. Or, maybe not, either, because an awful lot of aficionados of American West Coast '60s music will hear about this stunning new comp and say, "Oh, yeah, there was a comp in the '80s, I have this already." No, you don't. Because this set (on one CD or two LPs) contains many previously unreleased tracks (with pretty much no filler) and also some very welcome sonic upgrades of material that originally appeared on Psycho Records' *I Flash Daily* collection (which more than one *Shindig!* writer has pretty much worn out their copy of).

They first came together in Seattle, in 1964; a hotbed of musical activity at that time. Unfortunately, it wasn't exactly fertile ground for a forward-thinking bunch of musicians looking to break new ground. The Pacific Northwest was still ruled by The Sonics, Wailers, Kingsmen, Frantics, Don & The Goodtimes, and the early hard-driving incarnation of Paul Revere & The Raiders. Lots of ear-splitting saxophones and frenzied dance moves. No folk-rock and *definitely* no flutes. All but boxed-out of the local club scene, The Daily Flash (Steve Lalor, Don MacAllister, Doug Hastings and Jon Keliehor) had to make their way by putting on their own events, at which they could play the kind of music that interested them. Folk-rock is a good general description (MacAllister was a mandolin player who switched to the electric bass – does that sound at all familiar, Byrds fans?) but these guys were not just 'It Ain't Me Babe'.

That said, their first recording – little more than a home demo, but very polished and exciting – did just happen to be a Byrdsian romp through Dylan's 'Let Me Die In My Footsteps', released in this collection for the first time. It caught the attention of legendary (and controversial) management team Charles Greene and Brian Stone (Buffalo Springfield, Sonny & Cher, Iron Butterfly) and that *should* have been the moment when all the doors flew open.

Under the aegis of local promoter Ron Saul, the band recorded three more songs: a faithful rendering of 'Queen Jane Approximately', 'Jack Of Diamonds' and a spectacular version of Dino Valenti's 'Birdses'. The first two comprised the band's first single. 'Birdses' survived only as a terrible-sounding dub from an acetate – but is finally making its first appearance here, from a recently-discovered alternate source and sounding wonderful.

Now contracted to Green and Stone's York-Pala Productions, they took to recording in earnest. At first, they were concentrating on more cover versions – conventional choices like 'If I Were a Carpenter', but also brilliant re-imaginings such as their version of Ian Tyson's 'The French Girl', which garnered significant airplay in their new home base of LA in early '67, with Len Chandler's 'Green Rocky Road' on the B-side.

Some of the more faithful covers may fit your definition of "unnecessary". The band knew this as well, and Lalor (with some help from the other members) finally sat down and started writing songs. You'll wish there were more of them, because they're all well worthy of sitting in the same setting as 'The French Girl'. Several make their first appearance on this historically significant and hugely listenable set.

"The Pacific Northwest was still ruled by ear-splitting saxophones and frenzied dance moves. No folk-rock and definitely no flutes"

The Daily Flash. They navigated a green rocky road

THE BEVIS FROND
An Introduction To The Bevis Frond
★★★★

FRUITS DE MER CD

Nick Saloman, AKA The Bevis Frond, has been a key contributor to Fruits de Mer's bespoke vinyl comps throughout the label's 15-year history, so is a natural choice for their anniversary series of single artist CD collections featuring cuts exclusive to long-OOP limited LPs and 45s, plus, in this case, three unreleased demos.

Inevitably heavy on cover versions, the album opens with the uncharacteristically bluesy 'Creepin' Around' (originally by Sky Saxon) and includes a 24-minute take on the Electric Sandwich obscurity 'China' that gives Wooden Shjips a run for their money in the spacey psych states. But Saloman's own songs are the real keepers, such as 'I'm A Stone', which is classic Frond in its self-pitying, heavy psychedelic folk-rock, and melancholy gems like 'Not Quite Home' and 'This Sinking Feeling'. The bittersweet pop of 'Condition Blue' almost feels like a Christmas song: wintry, melodic, grand. No better introduction is needed.

Ben Graham

COSMETIQUE
The Lace And The Longing
★★★★

BLOW UP CD/LP

Ex-deejays Justin Anderson and Sarah Churchill's sophomore album (recorded over 20 years ago) finally sees release.

A little spit and polish and remastering produced fresh mixes that kick off with the snappy single 'Drink And Jive', a lo-fi toe-tapper with a motoric beat that conjures Stereolab and The Limiñanas. 'In The Morning' sashays across the dancefloor bumping into 'New Rules' (think Phil Spector tackling Screamin' Jay Hawkins with a wordless girl-group chorus), and the noir-ish tears-in-your-beers weeper 'How You Broke My Heart' enjoys an eerie David Lynch vibe destined for the *Twin Peaks* roadhouse. The short (20-minute) set peaks with the mesmerizing heart-tugger 'A Kiss A Kiss' (Raveonettes with a Saint Etienne chaser). The duo call it "dark electro pop" – I call it fizzy fuzzy-wuzzy garage a-go-go with a finger-snapping beat. You'll call it fab and rush out to get it.

Jeff Penczak

DIFFORD & TILBROOK
Difford & Tilbrook
★★★★

FLOATING WORLD CD

Released during a brief dissolution of Squeeze in the '80s, Chris Difford and Glenn Tilbrook's eponymous 1984 album was recorded in an avalanche of acrimony, alcohol, class As and, judging by the cover shot, expensive togs and blow-dried hairdos.

Still, if its genesis was painful, the results were terrific, yielding some cracking song writing, including synth-driven opener 'Action Speaks Louder', and earworm singles 'Love's Crashing Waves' and 'Picking Up The Pieces', all given an '80s polish by original producer Tony Visconti and (intriguingly) Sugarhill Gang associate ET Thorngren, brought in to gussy up proceedings. This reissue lacks bonus material (such as the era's excellent B-sides), but there are thorough liner notes from Alan Robinson that posit the album as an attempt to emulate the success of Hall & Oates' blue-eyed soul sound. Yet if cuts like 'On My Mind' have a smooth Philly-meets-Sade style, this is ultimately unmistakably Squeeze.

Thomas Patterson

THE DOUG DILLARD EXPEDITION
Live At The Fremont Hotel, Las Vegas, 1970
★★★★

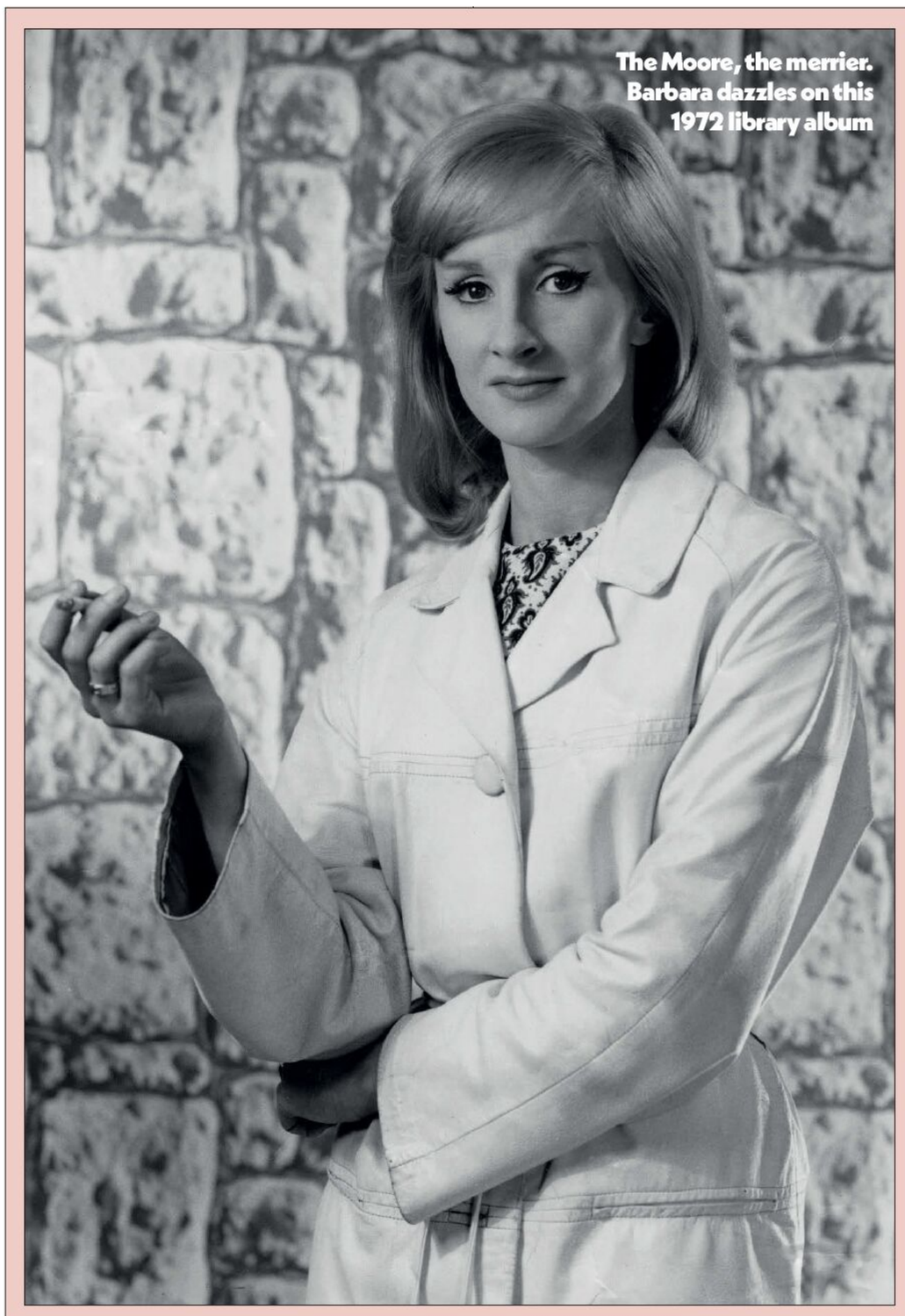
FLOATING WORLD CD

The best live albums transport you to the time and place they were recorded, allowing the listener to feel they are actually in the room. This barnstorming performance by The Doug Dillard Expedition does just that.

Played for what sounds like a small but enthusiastic crowd, the music is punctuated with whoops, hollers and handclaps from both stage and hotel dance floor. The Expedition had close connections with The Byrds – fiddler Byron Berline guested on *Untitled* and Dillard partnered with Gene Clark for two classic albums – but there is no concession here to the contemporary rock scene. This is traditional bluegrass, a succession of standards such as 'Uncle Pen' and 'Dixie Breakdown' rendered with suppleness and at breathless speed. The rousing version of Lead Belly's 'Take A Whiff On Me' is one of the many highlights on an album with excellent sound quality and a richly illustrated and informative booklet.

Clive Webb

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio


The Moore, the merrier. Barbara dazzles on this 1972 library album

Shades Of Biege

THE ROGER WEBB SOUND
Moonshade
★★★★★

BARBARA MOORE
Vocal Shades And Tones
★★★★★

BOTH BE WITH LPS

There's a lot of talk about musical Holy Grails these days, with all manner of perfectly acceptable but ultimately unworthy records becoming elevated to mythical status based largely on their monetary value. For connoisseurs of British library music, *Moonshade* and *Vocal Shades And Tones* have become highly sought-after for the *right* reasons: as perfect examples of musicianship and songcraft – uplifting, bright, jazzy, yet tinged with that early '70s melancholy that enabled Webb's 'Moon Bird' to sit alongside Caravan and Bill Fay on *English Weather*, and Moore's 'Steam Heat' to turn up in *The Sweeney*.

With the De Wolfe library seemingly more agreeable than ever to license entire albums – as opposed to individual tracks – for reissue, it was only a matter of time before the Be With label (*Shindig!*'s best of 2023) got to tackle these monsters, having performed forensic archaeological work on numerous library heavy-hitters over the past few years.

Moonshade sends ripples of warm familiarity down the spine. Employing a wide palette of keyboard instruments, gently electrified guitars, lighter-than-air percussion, upright bass and Barbara Moore's wordless vocals (Moore was essentially the English Edda Dello'Orso, right?), its 16 vignettes probably ended up soundtracking a Stevenage Tourist Board film and a TV magic show. Let's not forget, nobody actually *bought* these albums back in 1971. (Note: If this writer only ever hears 'Sunshine' on a loop for the rest of his life, he'll die happy.)

Vocal Shades And Tones places Moore and her singers' miraculous voices front and centre, allowing them to paint a pleasingly eclectic picture that takes in Anita Kerr-style vocalese, haunting chorales, pastoral jazz and fish-and-chips bossa-nova. Flawless, exquisite music for us to cherish.

Andy Morten

reviews then

EUCLID
Heavy Equipment
★★★★

FLYING DUTCHMAN LP

Originally released on the Amsterdam imprint of Bob Thiele's Flying Dutchman jazz label in 1970, Euclid's long out of print *Heavy Equipment* is something of a *cause célèbre* among collectors when it comes to long lost slabs of unrelentingly full-on American hard-rock from back in the day.

Carrying the mightiest of payloads and continually pushing the decibel count Euclid, a four piece from Haverill, Massachusets, fashion a bruising proto-metal marauding bulldozer wall of sound in which pulverising layers of guitar, big-lunged vocals and thundering drums are compressed into what feels like a sleek highly polished sheen.

Frequently bootlegged down the decades and now finally back on vinyl, this most atypically smooth sounding monster rock waxing from the dawn of the '70s comes complete with suitably muscled-up covers of The Spencer Davis Group's 'Gimme Some Lovin'' and Bobby Womack's 'It's All Over Now'.

Grahame Bent

LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

FANTASY TRAIN
Fantasy Train
★★★

SUBLIMINAL SOUNDS LP

Hailing from tiny New Tazewell in Tennessee, Fantasy Train was a multiracial, multi-gendered band that got together after school to do their thing, their thing being to blend the then-current Minneapolis sound with '60s R&B and '70s funk 'n' soul to create this 1984 curiosity.

Top tunes include the (surely) Cameo-influenced 'Scrapbook', the pound store Chi-Lites of 'Can't Stop (Don't Know How)', the Stylistically styled 'You And Me' – you can practically see those middle eight dance moves – and velvety smooth opener, the full-decade-too-late 'Baby's A Lady'. On the flipside, 'Unicorns & Rainbows' is as bad as the title suggests, and the production values are so weedy they make the horns sound like argumentative chimps. Overall, think Donnie & Joe Emerson without the Evel Knievel jumpsuits. I'm a sucker for such curios – if you are too, grab it now; the vinyl is limited to 1000 copies.

Peter Gallagher

THE FUZZTONES
Live At The Dive '85
★★★

AREA PIRATA CD

Recorded at The Dive, the tiny venue that was at the hub of the New York garage-rock scene, just before it closed its doors in the mid-80s, here are The Fuzztones performing in their natural environment. Responsible in a large part for the '80s NYC garage revival, the trademark jagged fuzzed-up sound and wailing harp groove is present and correct as the band bludgeon their way through a set of their own compositions and some adroitly chosen covers.

From the nagging chord progressions of 'She's Wicked' to the grinding throwback beat of '1-2-5', these tracks provide a handbook for a breadth of garage band stylings, where the loosely distorted organ of ? & The Mysterians meets the clanging guitar swagger of The Standells to form a brain pounding compound of joyous noise. The vocals are somewhat muddy around the edges but, unsurprisingly, that feels entirely appropriate to the mood.

Henry Hutton

THE HIGH DIALS
A New Devotion (20th Anniversary Edition)
★★★★

HOOK & PRAYER DIGITAL

Montreal four-piece psych-rockers The High Dials were slightly over-ambitious when they released their debut in 2003. For starters, it was a concept album – a dystopian tale about someone called Silas who finds himself trapped in a futuristic nightmare – and it weighed in at 76 minutes. That's a lot of music from a band no-one knew. On top of that, its commercial progress was stymied by critics who, back then, sniffily dismissed the band's Who/Pretty Things retro vibe.

But, as is so often the case, the album has been positively re-evaluated over time (championed by the likes of Al Kooper and Andrew Loog Oldham) and is now regarded as an underground masterpiece.

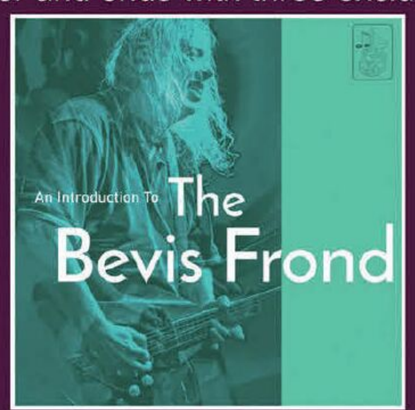
This 20th Anniversary re-release features extra tracks and, crucially, rectifies some of the original cost-cutting flaws – such as rushed, muddy mixes. Anyone wishing to explore should make a beeline for 'Can You Hear The Bells?' – a wonderful slice of baroque-pop that sounds like The Zombies on space dust.

Chris Twomey

Fruits de Mer Records
psychedelia, krautrock, prog rock, acid folk - classic, long-lost and new

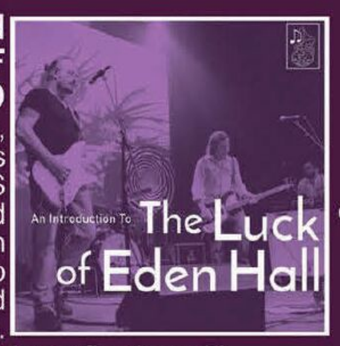
THE FISHHEADS 'LOBSTER BASQUE REPLICA' LP+CD
Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the aquarium, The Fishheads return, this time with an album of covers, including tracks originally recorded by Pink Floyd and Mighty Baby.
The Fishheads include Marc Swordfish, Anton Barbeau, Simon House, Icarus Peel and members of Astralasia.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BEVIS FROND CD
...although Nick Saloman really needs no introduction to Shindig! readers - a brilliant guitarist and songwriter, who has being following a fiercely independent path for over 50 years. This new set contains 70 minutes of recordings Nick has released through Fruits de Mer and ends with three exclusive demos.



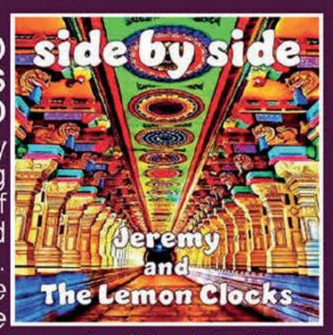
SENDELICA 'MAN, MYTH & MAGIC' 2xLP
a double LP, this is the third in the band's continuing look at mankind's relationship with its world, religion, magic and myths. Four sidelong instrumentals that flow from ambience to full-on spacerock.Gatefold die-cut sleeve, colour vinyl, printed inners and poster, this set looks almost as good as it sounds.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LUCK OF EDEN HALL CD
Fruits de Mer retrospective, pulling together tracks released by this great US psychedelic rock band during their 10 years with the label, together with two previously-unreleased covers.
"Fearless, ambitious and overflowing with possibilities" Andy Morten, Shindig!



HANFORD FLYOVER 'SOURCE' CD
Josh and Holly deliver a stunning new album of original songs. Folktronica meets motorik grooves, and Fruits de Mer proves it doesn't spend its time entirely in 1967.

JEREMY AND THE LEMON CLOCKS 'SIDE BY SIDE' 2xCD
Over two hours of covers by Jeremy Morris, including massively extended versions of 'Green Tambourine' and 'Crimson and Clover'.
"a dazzlingly ambitious salute to selected peaks from the golden age of Anglo-American psych of the late '60s and early '70s...a genuinely epic undertaking by anyone's standards" Graham Bent, Shindig!



read all about it at...
www.fruitsdemerrecords.com

a cellarful of soul

PAUL RITCHIE gets down with the latest soul and funk titles, old and new

First up this month is a motherlode of **ARETHA FRANKLIN** goodies. It doesn't feel that long ago that we were celebrating a comprehensive CD box set featuring the late singer's back catalogue, and in 2018 Rhino treated us to a six-album box containing her '60s Atlantic LPs. **A Portrait Of The Queen 1970-1974** (★★★★★, BMG 5-CD/6-LP BOX SET) complements that set but goes one step further. The albums included in this set are *This Girl's In Love With You, Spirit In The Dark, Young Gifted And Black, Hey Now Hey (The Other Side Of The Sky* and *Let Me In Your Life.* Arguably, this was Aretha's most fruitful period. It marked a period of creativity and experimentation, with the singer embracing Black consciousness, most significantly on *Young, Gifted And Black*, which produced the timeless funk monster 'Rock Steady'. The CD set includes a plethora of bonus material collecting session alternates, out-takes, B-sides and demos, whilst the vinyl set includes a sixth LP of highlights from same. With original albums hard to track down, this is a worthy and essential release from a truly unique interpreter of song.

At this time of year, it would be remiss not to mention Christmas. **Stax Christmas** (★★★★, STAX/CRAFT RECORDINGS LP), is a collection of, you guessed it, seasonal tracks performed by your favourite Stax artists, including Rufus Thomas, Isaac Hayes and Booker T & The MG's. Even the most cynical of cynics might be surprised by these yuletide offerings. The Stax sound really does transcend any commercial trappings typically associated with Christmas songs. The Staple Singers' wholesome 'Who Took The Merry Out Of Christmas' dials in to an alternative sense of what Christmas is all about. Similarly, there's a distinctive rootsy feel to the unreleased alternate mix of 'Merry Christmas Baby' by Otis Redding, and Carla Thomas's previously unreleased recording of 'Blue Christmas' also runs deep.

In a long and distinguished career **CANDI STATON** has created music for all seasons. No matter what the style, her country, gospel and R&B roots have always shone through. Nineteen-seventy debut *I'm Just A Prisoner* and follow-up **Stand By Your Man** (BOTH ★★★★, BOTH KENT) have been reissued in both vinyl and CD editions. Produced by Rick Hall and backed by the funky FAME gang of crack musicians. Both albums are solid, gritty southern soul productions. Though the writers were often male, the lyrical content suited a female perspective; Staton sang her songs as she had lived them. Her debut includes a revealing interview with the singer proclaiming how her storytelling ran deep from within. "I basically sing from my heart. I would relive what I had already lived. The hurt, the feelings of abuse, and they would come out in the song."

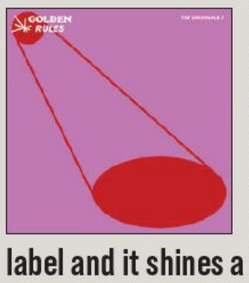
Perhaps less known, **CLYDIE KING** was a successful and much-loved back-up singer. She appeared on many well-known hits and recorded with The Rolling Stones, Humble Pie and Bob Dylan. Her solo albums, though under-appreciated, are worth tracking down. **Direct Me** (★★★★, FLOATING WORLD CD) gets a welcome CD reissue – hopefully a vinyl version will follow. The title track is a gutsy, funky cover of an Otis Redding B-side and she closes an album that flirts with solid funk and soul material, with a faithful cover of The Beatles' 'The Long And Winding Road'.

Skyway Soul: Gary, Indiana (★★★★, NUMERO GROUP CD) pays homage to the hitherto hidden musical talents that lurked in the shadows of the city that famously spawned The Jackson 5. It's a real trip through the ages, so expect a variety of production styles. Starting with the superb harmony soul of 'Wait A Minute Girl' by The Newday and continuing with the raw soul sounds of El Anthony and Nate Evans. The set moves quickly onto the '80s with interesting electro-funk experiments and post disco-pop from wannabes Junei, Into New Dimensions and Billy Foster. Copiously researched liner notes tell the full story of all the hopefuls featured.

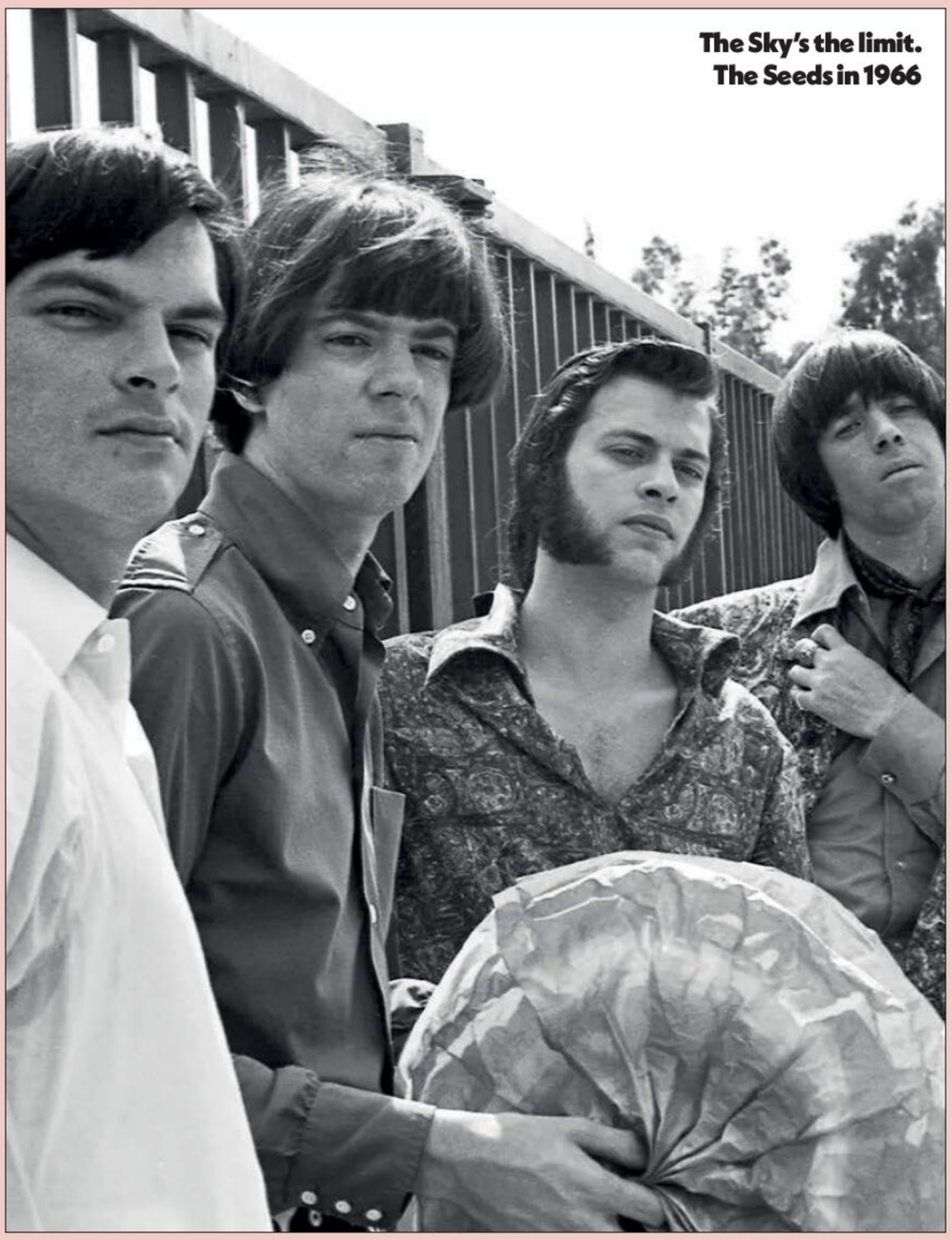
Should you prefer your soul on the mellow and smooth side, **Yacht Soul: The Cover Versions 2** (★★★, TOO SLOW TO DISCO CD/2-LP) provides the perfect soundtrack to lazy days in the hazy sun (hey, we can hope). The premise is R&B acts covering hits by their white contemporaries. Mel & Tim's sumptuous Stax recording of 'Keep The Faith' is balm for the soul, The Isley Brothers bring a funky flavour to The Doobie Brothers' 'Listen To The Music', Billy Paul gives Carole King's 'It's Too Late' a Philly soul makeover and John Edwards strikes soul gold with America's 'Tin Man'.

Prior to his untimely and tragic demise, **OTIS REDDING** had recorded enough studio material to fill more than four posthumous albums. The third, **Love Man** (★★★, ATLANTIC/RHINO LP), originally released in 1968, is faithfully reproduced here, albeit on flimsy red vinyl. A replica four-track promo EP, sent out to radio stations to promote tracks from the album, is included as a bonus seven-inch.

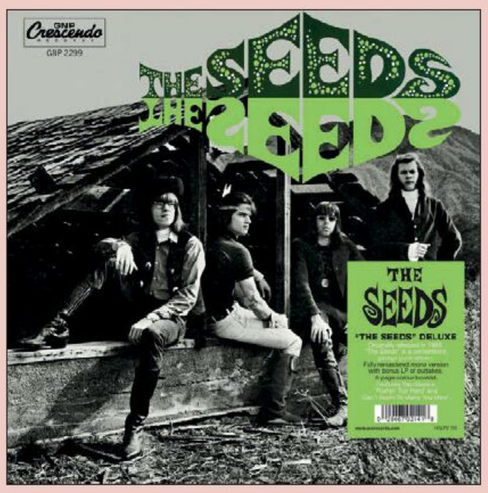
A similar approach is taken with a straight repress of **Soul 69** by **ARETHA FRANKLIN** (★★★, ATLANTIC/RHINO LP). Though this time the bonus seven-inch features the single 'Gentle On My Mind' coupled with superior non-album track 'I Can't See Myself Leaving You'. There's a whiff of "What's the point?" to both releases and a nagging sense that both artists deserve better. Tracking down original copies might prove more satisfying all round.



Moving to the present day and kudos to the team behind **Golden Rules: The Originals 3** (★★★★, GOLDEN RULES LP). This is the third volume from the German label and it shines a fresh light on a bunch of cool contemporary soul and funk artists from around the world. James Brown like funk from Carlton Jumel Smith, a terrific double shot of sweet sister soul by Cole Williams and Fernanda Valdive, heavy psych funk breaks by Brother Lee, and even a dose of Afrobeat by Alogte Oho & His Sounds Of Joy, are amongst the many highlights of a thoroughly entertaining and eclectic set.



Keep On Pushin'



THE SEEDS
The Seeds
★★★★

BIG BEAT 2-LP

The Seeds' 1966 debut album was an assault on the senses as frontman Sky Saxon spat out a dozen songs with all the relish of a demented hyena attacking its prey, his fellow bandmates joining in with the carnage.

The epitome of psychedelic garage-rock at its finest, there's now another deluxe edition which, in fairness, is not a great deal different to the 50-year anniversary special that came out seven years ago. But this is The Seeds, and any release should be gobbled up, voraciously.

The original dozen are all killers, as Saxon (who sounds like an angry Buddy Holly on acid), along with Jan Savage, Daryl Hooper and Rick Aldridge, blast through an arsenal of self-penned material that was the antithesis of, and a venomous dichotomy to, the harmonic masterpieces of fellow Californians The Beach Boys, Association and others of their ilk.

'Pushin' Too Hard' and 'Can't Seem To Make You Mine' are the most well-known bullets from The Seeds' gun here, and take one of the former is included, with the boys recording a perfectly adequate rendition of their signature tune, but the released version just has the edge. Anyway, The Seeds didn't usually do "adequate".

But one alternate take that steamrollers across the "proper" version is undoubtedly the foot-tapping 'Nobody Spoil My Fun', with the delicious surf guitar much higher in the mix, which takes it to another level and is the star attraction in the package. That one's on repeat.

'Dreaming Of Your Love' was shelved at the time and boasts rare bursts of Saxon falsetto, a rawer take of 'Excuse, Excuse' is quieter than the album take, but the master version of 'Out Of The Question' is much harder than its eventual unidentical twin on third album *Future*. There are alternate slices of 'It's A Hard Life' and 'You Can't Be Trusted', while take two of 'Try To Understand"s B-side 'The Other Place' calms things down a little. Then there's the frenetic, 16-minute unedited take of 'Evil Hoodoo'. And it's fabulously mental.

Dom Picksley

OSMO LINDEMAN
Electronic Works
★★★★

SÄHKÖ RECORDINGS CD/2-LP

Despite his accomplishments in jazz and classical, Finland's Osmo Lindeman abandoned everything except electronic music in 1968 for the last chapter of his long career, a period which is the subject of this new compilation.

Mostly previously unreleased, it's a varied set – the beeps of opener 'Kinetic Forms' feel like you could load them into your ZX Spectrum, while the Stravinsky-esque 'Variable', which predates Lindeman's eschewing of traditional instrumentation, wouldn't be out of place on the score to *Planet Of The Apes*. His installation work is best represented by 'Is This The World Of Teddy', a disorientating short film score, while his briefer commercial cues remind us that at one time even Sunkist and Fin-Humus embraced the electronic sound of the future for their advertising. Two previously released works end the collection, the still-startling 'Ritual' and the queasy, lonely 'Spectacle', the composer's final entry in a highly impressive body of work.

Christopher Budd

DAVE MASON
Long Lost Friend: The Best Of Dave Mason
★★★★

FLOATING WORLD CD

A 19-strong compilation of solo material from the former Traffic/Derek & The Dominos/Delaney & Bonnie/Family man, who upped sticks from The Black Country for the sunny shores of California, where he became a prolific solo artist, recording a trio of albums for Blue Thumb (one with Mama Cass) before setting up stall with Columbia for a further six made between 1974 and '80 and from which this comp is culled.

Less rootsy than the Blue Thumb era, Mason's Columbia material is of a soft/yacht-rock hue, a mix of smooth originals, funked-up live takes of classics like 'Feelin' Alright?', utterly OTT covers of cuts such as 'Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?', polished to the nth degree and, on 'Save Me', even an appearance from a young Michael Jackson. So '70s California cool, it should come with a polyester leisure suit and coke spoon and is therefore marvellous.

Thomas Patterson

MAJIC SHIP
Majic Ship
★★★

GUERSSEN LP

You're going to wish this band's story had not ended the way it did – with a raging fire that destroyed their communal house, studio, and all their gear, breaking them up not long after the release of this LP – while they were all either still in or just out of their teens. Because the record is a classic "Wow, this is great for a bunch of kids, I can't wait to hear what they do next time" experience. But with no next time. Their story is familiar sounding. They're 14 years old, they see The Beatles on *Sullivan* and they need to start a band. Before most of them have instruments. They shed and replace a member or two, are quickly discovered by an industry pro (Johnny Mann, in this case) and quickly write some original material and make a record.

It's darn good. A very NYC-sounding effort, especially vocally. From crunchy hard-rock to folky ballads. The only disposable song, a faithful but unnecessary cover of Neil Young's 'Down By the River', only makes you wish they'd written a couple more of their own instead.

Mike Fornatale

THE MOSQUITOS
In The Shadows
★★★★

AREA PIRATA LP

Long Island combo The Mosquitos operated throughout the early '80s, specialising in the kind of highly melodic powerpop and rock as typified by many mid-60s Merseybeat and British Invasion style groups.

Some of their material also inclines more towards rawer beat and garage territory, for example the great 'Darn Well' which graced Roir's *Garage Sale* cassette in 1985. They even had mega popsters The Monkees cover their song 'That Was Then, This Is Now', turning it into a successful chart single that gave the LA funsters a late in the day career boost. The infectious 'You Don't Give A Hang (About Me)' sets the scene perfectly with its cool trebly guitar sound and Vance Brescia and Iain Morrison's infectious vocals.

Further tracks offering more full-bodied, energetic group performances include 'Don't Know Why', 'I Know A Secret' and 'Do You Want To Hurt Me?' This release follows on from their *This Then Are...* CD collection. Great, and better late than never.

Lenny Helsing

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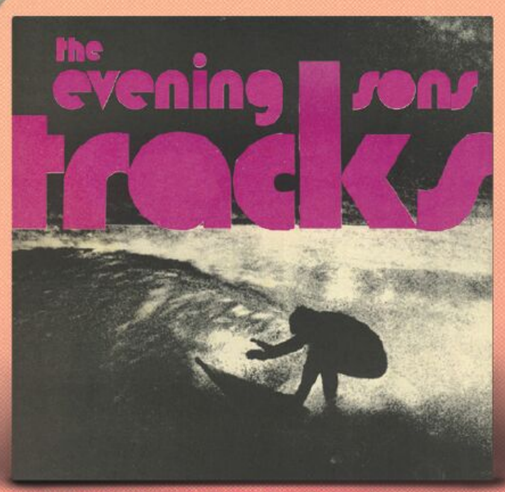

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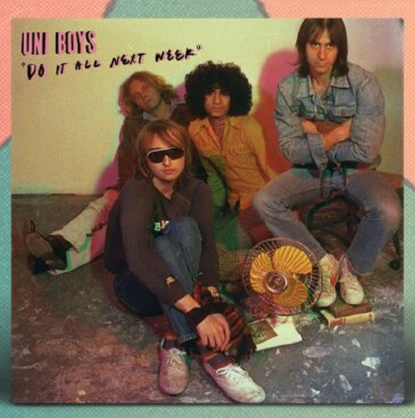

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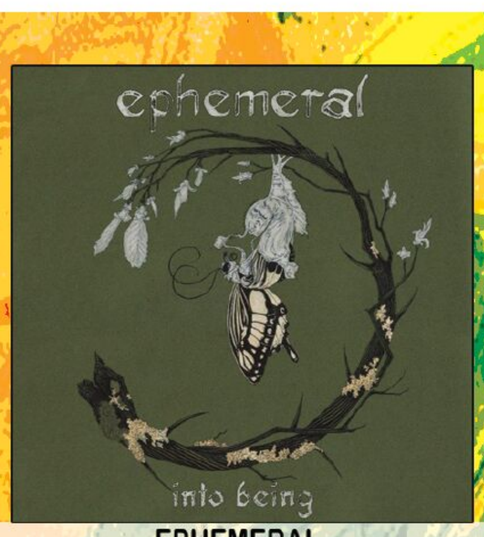

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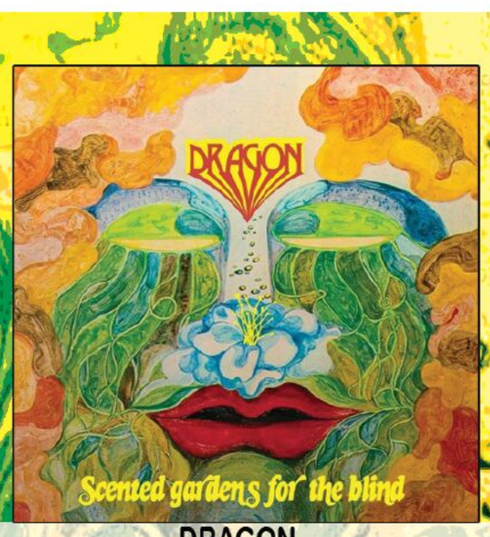

DRAGON
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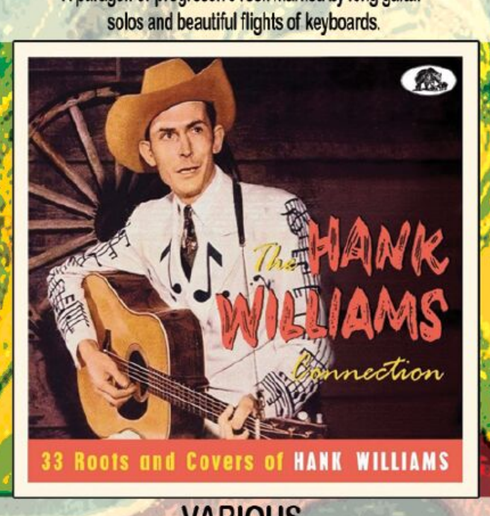
The complete recordings from the mysterious British psychedelic pop group- originating from the ashes of Merseybeat band The Kirkby's.



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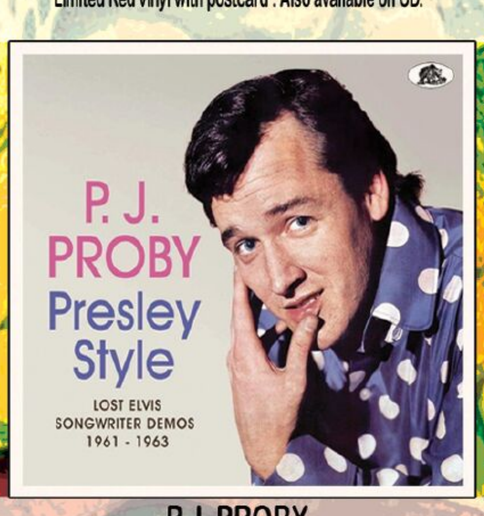

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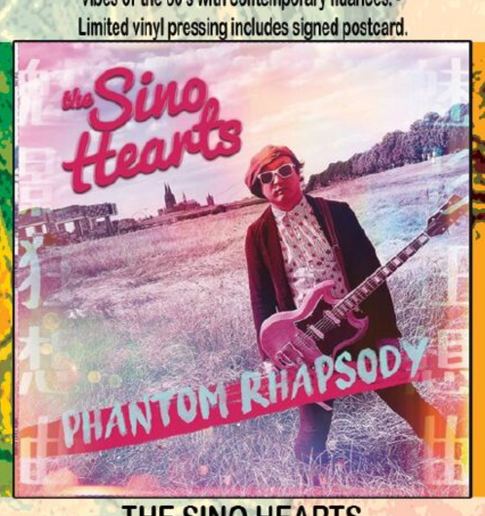

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The Ophelias bare all

THE MOVE
Shazam
★★★★

ESOTERIC LP

The 1970 classic from The Move gets another airing, with a remastered vinyl edition, along with fully restored artwork. As album covers go, this is a beauty, with the four group members depicted as superheroes on the front.

Although highly regarded among fans, *Shazam* a curious ensemble of tracks, with just six songs – half of them Roy Wood numbers, the other half covers. Side One stands the test of time with 'Hello Susie' (proto-glam superpop), the exquisite, string-drenched 'Beautiful Daughter' and 'Cherry Blossom Clinic Revisited' (an improved update on muddy first album closer 'Cherry Blossom Clinic') delivering the goods. Side Two, though, feels a long way from those earlier two-minute pop masterpieces, as 'Fields Of People', 'Don't Make My Baby Blue' and 'The Last Thing On My Mind' lean towards being extended, proto-metal jams, albeit shot through with superb playing and singing and a thundering, crystal-clear production.

Dom Picksley

THE NOMADS
Where The Wolf Blane Blooms (40th Anniversary Edition)
★★★★

BUSY BEE LP

The original 1983 six-track mini-album that kickstarted the Swedish garage revival is now expanded with a further nine tracks of single sides and demos, dating back to 1981. These brilliantly paint the full picture of this revolutionary rock 'n' roll band's visceral early days. Kids with guitars took note, and since then the country has produced some of the best backward looking but equally vital guitar-based music in the world, from The Creeps to The Soundtrack Of Our Lives and The Hives.

The Nomads took lead from The Cramps, Gun Club, and other black-haired miscreants, invigorating the music of the recent past with a snotty and wild punk attitude. This new vinyl set is a wonderful legacy, and a telling example of how '60s garage was completely relevant in the early '80s musical wasteland. Just listen to the covers of 'I'm Five Years Ahead Of My Time' and 'Double Decker Bus' for proof.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills

THE OPHELIAS
Bare Bodkin
★★★★

INDEPENDENT PROJECT 2-LP

The Ophelias was a neo-psychedelic band that operated out of San Francisco in the '80s, signing to Rough Trade US and making a sound that mashed a Syd Barrett sense of whimsy with a dash of early alt-rock heft (think Donovan jamming with Pete Hammill, or The Violent Femmes covering the Canterbury scene, or simply '80s King Crimson). Had they existed a decade later, one could imagine them at the forefront of the Elephant 6 scene, but instead, they made do with some college radio success before splitting at the tail end of the decade.

Bare Bodkin is a career spanning compilation, first released digitally a couple of years back and now given an ultra-lavish double vinyl treatment (typical of the care label Independent Project afford all their gear). Mixing old and unreleased material, this is a spiffing set, odd and intriguing, revealing chief Ophelia Leslie Medford as an eccentric auteur, both out of and ahead of time.

Thomas Patterson

PLUSH
More You Becomes You
★★★★

WEIRD VACATION CD/LP

First released in 1998, the debut album by Liam Hayes, AKA Plush, has lost none of its gentle power.

What you hear sounds deceptively simple, a solitary musician sat unaccompanied at the piano, singing a sequence of tender ballads in a softly sweet tone. For all its apparent spontaneity the album was in reality constructed through meticulous editing. More important than the methods are the results, a superbly crafted set reminiscent of heavyweights like Harry Nilsson and Laura Nyro. The consistency of its sound creates the effect of a tone poem, one song languidly sliding into another. Despite the maudlin mood, there are moments of humour. Hayes laughs at his own struggle to reach a high note on '(I Didn't Know) I Was Asleep' and while 'The Instrumental' turns out to be nothing of the sort, the wordless 'Save The People' follows it. Ideal for early mornings or late nights, this is a welcome reissue of a unique artefact.

Clive Webb

PULSE
Pulse
★★★

OUT-SIDER LP

From the middle of nowhere (New Haven, Connecticut) came Pulse, a six-piece outfit trading in impressively full-blooded, blues-immersed psych on this, their one and only album. Originally released on local label Poison Ring, the label owned by the band's producer 'Doc' Cavalier AKA Trod Nossel, this is its first ever official vinyl reissue.

Pulse emerged in 1967 after the break-up of popular local bands The Shags and The Bram Rigg Set and, it has be said, the sounds captured here are something of a revelation. Straight from the off, the emphasis is on the sheer gutsiness of the sound and the collective power of the performances. A checklist of major names including Cream, Mountain, Steppenwolf and Iron Butterfly come to mind when sampling Pulse's potent distillation of blues and psych influences as heard on the remarkably assured contours of 'Another Woman', 'Hypnotized', 'Lo-Down' and 'She's Killin' Me.'

Grahame Bent

THE REVILLOS
Here Come... The Revillos
★★★★

HEAVY SOUL LP

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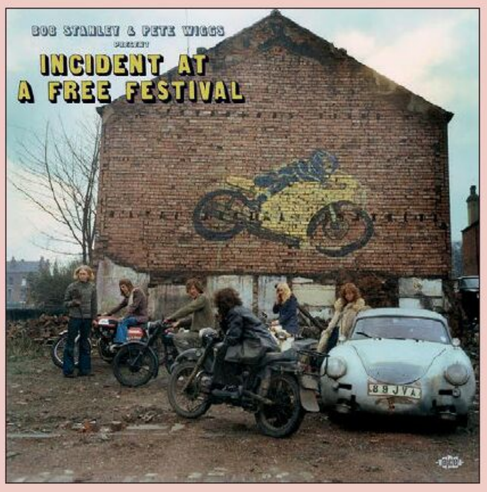


VARIOUS ARTISTS
Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present Incident At A Free Festival
★★★★

ACE CD/2-LP

There was a time, young reader, when music festivals were not routinely equipped with luxury glamping yurts, 52 boutique stages, each lovingly curated by a Nobel-nominated YouTube influencer, The Unicorn Forest Glade cocktail bar where a Hollywood A-lister is inevitably performing a secret set for VIP ticket holders, and a 12-acre food court serving freshly prepared traditional dishes from around the world. Step back, if you dare, to the early '70s, when British Summertime was a synonym for constant drizzle (plus occasional drought-inducing incendiary heatwaves) and festivals were decidedly makeshift affairs, underground and sometimes underwater, where the bands played all night, the PA was constructed by a cowboy scaffolding crew from Rotherham, you slept in your greatcoat in the mud where you fell and hitched home with a thousand-yard stare when the brown ale ran out.

This is the era evoked on Bob Stanley's latest excellent bespoke compilation for Ace, one dominated by a certain breed of funky hard-rock band – post-psychedelic, but not exactly progressive – with ominous, hirsute vocals, crunching riffs, stabbing keyboards, vigorous, arm-waving rhythms and an over-extended drumkit featuring plenty of cowbell. 'Chasing Shadows' by the Mark I Deep Purple, Andwella's 'Hold Onto Your Mind', Atomic Rooster's 'Tomorrow Night' and 'For Mad Men Only' by Vertigo also-rans May Blitz all fit that description here, but there's also soulful jazz-rock from Manfred Mann Chapter Three, glam-grot oddities like Slowload's 'Big Boobs Boogie' and several appropriate selections from the KPM library to break up the grebo onslaught.

Classic freak anthems include The Edgar Broughton Band's Fugs-indebted chant 'Out Demons Out' (just say no, kids!), and The Pink Fairies' stoned-yet-decisive 'Do It' (just say yes!). The proto-rap, apocalyptic street poetry of Paladin's 'Third World' fills out the ranters 'n' preachers quotient, while the ubiquitous Hawkwind contribute Robert Calvert's concise, punky 'Ejection' and the indescribable Stackwaddy beam in from a parallel universe where krautrock evolved in northern English mill towns. It's enough to conjure Krumlin flashbacks: the headliners have cancelled and the rain's getting heavier, but with some soggy blotters and a sheet of tarpaulin we might just make it through.

Ben Graham

this new band continued to be influenced by early rock 'n' roll and the '60s girl group sound that had energised their previous incarnation.

Kicking off with the retro instrumental 'Secret Of The Shadow', there are nods to dance crazes, psychobilly and gimmicky 'Monster Mash'-style novelty discs, occasionally sprinkled with Joe Meek production flourishes, on tracks such as 'The Fiend' and 'Voodoo. While 'Yeah Yeah' is an obvious steal from The Rock-A-Teens' 'Who-Hoo', it can be forgiven, as the writing throughout is uncluttered and sympathetic to the genres the group is referencing. The covers are well chosen too: Johnny Kidd & The Pirates' 'Hungry For Love' contains classic choppy Mick Green-style guitar playing, 'Man Attack' includes some splendid Bo Diddley flourishes and 'Tell Him' could've been written for the band.

Henry Hutton

SECOND HAND
Reality
Death May Be Your Santa Claus
BOTH ★★★★

BOTH THINK LIKE A KEY CDS

A bunch of self-confessed Who and Small Faces fans, who'd already served three years as The Next Collection and The Moving Finger, South London teenagers Second Hand somehow managed to convey a sense of doom-laden ennui on much of *Reality*, their 1968 Polydor debut. They had the dense riff-rock moves and stoned music hall japes of *Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake* down pat but there's a grinding, slow motion at play here that allies it more closely with basement/downer prog than major label psych. (Note: Beware of Ethelion's bootleg vinyl edition currently doing the rounds.)

Two years later, after re-jigging the line-up and listening to a lot of Frank Zappa and Arthur Brown, they made *Death May Be Your Santa Claus*. It's a more coherent set, almost bereft of guitars, reliant on multiple keyboard instruments and percussion, alternately darkly experimental and stupidly uplifting.

Andy Morten

TELEGRAPH AVENUE
Telegraph Avenue
★★★★

MUNSTER LP

Formed by vocalist Cesar Ichikawa and his guitarist cousin Bo on their return to Peru following an eventful trip to the US in 1969 where they got to experience The Doors, Jefferson Airplane, Santana and Jimi Hendrix first hand, Telegraph Hill offer an imaginative merging of West Coast pop and psychedelic influences with a Latin rock foundation.

There's an unmistakably warm and dreamy quality to this, their '71 debut, thanks to its rich sound palette – male and female English language vocals, strident electric guitar, flute and percussion aplenty – routinely blended in a non-formulaic way. Best illustrated by tracks like 'Something's Going', 'Happy', 'Sweet Whatever', 'Lauralie' and 'Let Me Start', Telegraph Avenue bring outsider's ears to their take on late '60s West Coast hippie-pop and this contributes to making the album such an atypically memorable and rewarding listen.

Grahame Bent

Suit of Lights

MUSIC

vh-0722

The Empty Vault 2-track single

"Beatles/Colin Blunstone-esque... It might be selfish to crave more than six minutes of this orchestral allure, but if Darone ever envisions a 'Tommy'-conjuring double LP in this vein, I wouldn't object." - *The Big Takeover*

vh-0620

Hide and Seek LP/CD

"A brilliantly executed quasi-mashup of genres colliding into and melding with each other with no effort whatsoever, in the style of the classic writers such as Paul McCartney"
- *Jammerzine*

vh-0516

Break Open the Head LP/CD

"A sparkly sonic confection that's sheer nirvana for music aficionados. Simply superb." - *Jersey Beat*

"Brilliant... experimental and wildly creative... there is not a weak track here"
- *New Noise Magazine*

vh-0412

Shine On Forever CD

"A box full of sparkling little treasures, enough to delight even the most jaundiced ear... a beautiful and painstakingly crafted piece of work." - *Instrumental*

"A perfect package of genre defying indie tunes." - *Ellenwood*

vh-0309

Bacteria CD

"I'm not really sure why Suit of Lights decided to call the album Bacteria unless it's because the songs are infectious, sticking in your mind and eventually crippling your immune system to the point where all you want to do is listen to this album." - *Whatzup Magazine*

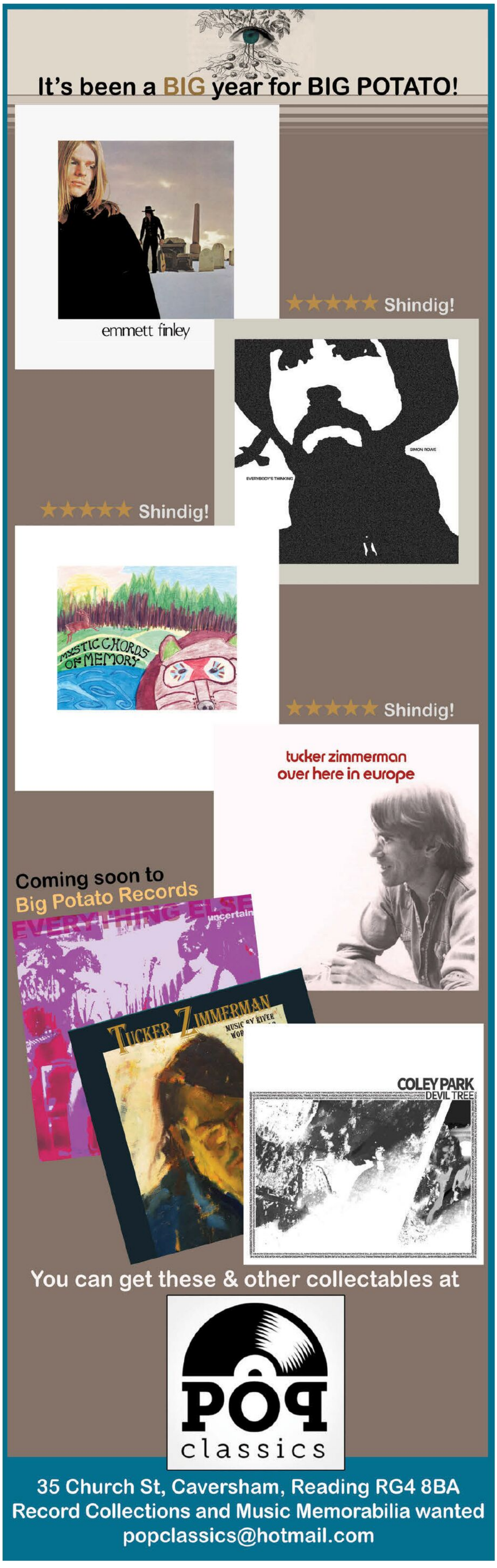
vh-0205

Suit of Lights CD

"A truly great, ten-song piece of art."
- *Score! Music Magazine*

"Darone's winning songs and convincing arrangements will soon be hotly sought-after by those in-the-know"
- *All Music Guide*

Limited edition vinyl, CD's, shirts, stickers and more at suitoflights.com visiting hours.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Brown Acid: The Seventeenth Trip
★★★★

RIDINGEASY CD/LP

These days the *Brown Acid* series needs no introduction as iteration #17 hits the shelves. But its longevity has dented neither the quality nor the power of music on show as RidingEasy continues its enthralling musical narrative of forgotten acid-rockers and freak-outs.

The Seventeenth Trip opens with little-known Canadian band Grapple's 1969 'Ethereal Genesis' sounding not unlike Iron Butterfly, before segueing into two rock bangers 'Witchcraft 71' and 'Smoky Bear' that display the era's immovable hallmarks of Black Sabbath and Led Zep. Crossfire's 'I Gotta Move' is hard and funky R&B, while Primevil's 'Too Dead To Live' reverts to the early days of Cream. 'I'm Lonely' has a wonderful '96 Tears'-style driving garage organ and there's a totally riotous version of Chuck Berry's 'Around and Around' by Truth & Janey. Rounding off with Strychnine's '78 punk-rock (the emphasis on rock) 'Jack The Ripper', this is a truly wild box of assortments.

Sarah Gregory

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Lost Innocence: Garpax 1960s Punk & Psych
★★★★★

MUNSTER 2-LP

The great Alec Palao delves again into the vaults of *Hollywood Maverick* producer

Gary S Paxton. In common with his previous compilations (previously released on Big Beat CDs) focusing on Paxton's work in every genre under the sun, these two-dozen punk-and-psychers please the ears on first listen – two days later you can't imagine how you've existed without these near-forgotten gems in your life.

The Whatt Four and The New Wing, who both appeared on 2015's superb *Happy Lovin' Time* Garpax sunshine-pop comp, each appear here thrice, rubbing shoulders with the likes of The Avengers and Limey & The Yanks (each contributing four cuts) plus, among others, a completely unknown band. Whoever they are, 'This Freedom I Have Found' is a smouldering fuzzed-out standout. If Palao can't solve the mystery, who can? Maybe it'll catch the ears of someone's grandfather, who will hazily recall one day in a Californian studio many moons ago?

Vic Templar

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Wig Out! Freak Out!
★★★★

TWO-PIERS 2-LP

Subtitled "Freakbeat & Mod Psychedelia Floor Fillers 1964-1969", Two-Piers' latest "Hey, let's throw the party right here!" 32-track double album is a follow-up of sorts to last year's *Garage Psychédélique*.

As with previous *Psychédélique* titles, it acts both as an introduction to neophytes ('Dirty Water', 'Don't Look Back' and 'Pushin' Too Hard' are here, for the hundredth time) and a deeper dive into rarities territory (this

writer had never heard The Argyles' 'Farmer John' before, for example). The lion's share of selections come from the US but there's a brief international reach courtesy of Canada's The Haunted and Singapore's Rita Chao With The Quests, and a dozen or so UK cuts (again, cornerstones from The Birds, Action, Eyes, Poets etc). You could argue that it might've made sense to hive these onto a dedicated set of their own (despite the current unusually crowded market for UK freakbeat and psych vinyl anthologies) but you can't argue that sticking this album on at your next house party should attract the wigs *and* the freaks.

Andy Morten

The Whatt Four? Out of the question!

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Women In Revolt! Underground Rebellion In British Music 1977-1985
★★★★

MUSIC FOR NATIONS CD/LP

The standard story of the punk revolution has been told and retold so many times, it feels pat and grey. Yet inch-by-inch, the spotlight has turned on the bands who lurked on the fringes even more determinedly doing their own thing. *Women In Revolt* is a companion to Tate Britain's trailblazing exhibition; a riot of women painters, photographers and film-makers. This is the gleefully political soundtrack to the wave of colour, feminism and mischief making that swept across Britain in the '70s and '80s.

There are some big-hitters; The Slits' 'Typical Girls' had to be here, as did 'Identity' by X-Ray Spex; spiky anthems for women who cackled together at the front of gigs. And a sprinkling of still-sparkling songs you'll hear played out by the granddaughters of the punks you couldn't burn: Mo-Dettes' 'White Mice', Marine Girls' 'In Love' and Aerosol Burns by 'Essential Logic'. A fine primer in sly, clever, pop.

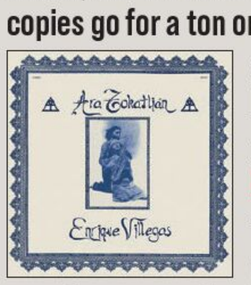
Kate Hodges

tune up

THOMAS PATTERSON takes on all-comers in this month's battle of the jazz

We love all types of jazz here at *Shindig!*, from bop to big band to electronic, but the thing that really gets our jazz juices flowing is *weird* jazz. And we're kicking off with an ultra-weird offering from a French group called **LE GRAND NEBULEUX ET SES LAVEURS DE CONSCIENCE**. A mysterious LP sent to us without press notes from Parisian record shop/label Monster Melodies, we're not even sure of the album's title, so we'll call it **Qu'est-ce que je fais dans ces latrines?** (★★★★, MONSTER MELODIES LP) after a speech bubble on the back cover. Internet research reveals it to be the second unreleased album from a jazz-rock group that at one time featured members of Urban Sax, recorded to 4-track circa 1979. The music is *un petit peu* psychedelic with a touch of dub, Afrobeat, krautrock, fuzzy spiritual-jazz and comedy vocals atop (think Zappa meets Gong doing a *Goon Show* sketch). The cover art meanwhile features a snake dressed as a pirate smoking a doobie, as you do. Daft as a brush *et* formidable.

Also from France, **MARION BROWN & LEO SMITH**'s **Creative Improvisation Ensemble** (★★★, FREEDOM LP) is a free-jazz extravaganza recorded by the American saxophonist and trumpeter in Paris circa 1970, reissued for the first time ever on vinyl. As with many free-jazz offerings, it's a clanking, clattering projectile of an album, one for fans of cacophony (and seeing as original copies go for a ton or more, there must be quite a few out there). Meanwhile,



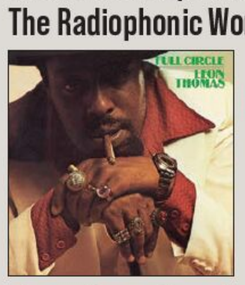
Inspiración (★★★★, ALTERCAT LP) by **ARA TOKATLIAN & ENRIQUE VILLEGAS** comes from a *Shindig!* fave label who are usually a dependable harbinger of out-there music but here bring us a straight-ahead spiritual-jazz beauty recorded in Argentina in '75, one that's flown somewhat under the radar. Mixing hypnotic horns with indigenous-sounding flutes, this is a fantastic set that sits nicely alongside recent Pharoah Sanders reissues. Congrats as ever to the indefatigable crate-diggers unearthing all this gear.

From Argentina to South Africa. We've featured a few South African jazz LPs in recent issues, and this month we have three interrelated albums from label We Are Busy Bodies, who've repressed a trio

featuring saxophonists Mike Makhalemele and Winston Mankunku Ngozi. **MIKE MAKHALEMELE**'s **The Peacemaker** (★★★★, WE ARE BUSY BODIES LP) from 1975 is a supremely funky jazz set with ace Fender playing by keyboardist Jabu Nkosi, reissued with groovy bonus track 'Peace Train', that should be scoring one of the classier Blaxploitation movies. Also from '75, **THE CLIFFS FEATURING WINSTON MANKUNKU NGOZI**'s **Alex Express**

(★★★★, WE ARE BUSY BODIES LP) is a strutting slice of horn-driven jazz with stellar guitar from Allen Kwela, who's album *Black Beauty* featured a couple of columns back. In '76, the duo came together for **MIKE MAKHALEMELE & WINSTON MANKUNKU NGOZI**'s **The Bull And The Lion** (★★★★, WE ARE BUSY BODIES LP), a much smoother proposition featuring future Yes man Trevor Rabin on guitar. All are ace.

Speaking of ace, Ace Records has been doing a grand job repressing the back catalogue of Bob Thiele's Flying Dutchman label, and we have three offerings from them this month. **JON APPLETON & DON CHERRY**'s **Human Music** (★★★, FLYING DUTCHMAN LP) sees polymath Cherry team up with electronic music pioneer Appleton to record a series of futuristic bleeps and bloops that could have come out of The Radiophonic Workshop stable. One for listeners who want to pretend they're a Clanger.



LEON THOMAS's **Full Circle** (★★★★, FLYING DUTCHMAN LP) from 1973 is a curio, an attempt to turn the jazz vocalist into soul/funk man (check out his pimped-out threads on the cover). Covers of Stevie Wonder and Santana abound, with backing provided by the likes of Pee Wee Ellis and Bernard Purdie. It's all flash and funky, but glimpses of Thomas' famous yodelling still burst through on tracks like the swirling, elongated 'It's My Life I'm Fighting For'.

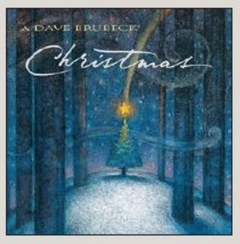
Finally, **JOHN CARTER / BOBBY BRADFORD**'s **Self Determination Music** (★★★, FLYING DUTCHMAN LP) is a freewheeling slice of progressive West Coast jazz from the saxophonist and trumpeter, with snaking melodies that flit in and out of vision, impossible to grasp but difficult to ignore. Best

listened to on a Malibu beach with some potent sinsemilla. Obviously.

Another label that consistently brings the heat is Craft, and we have four from them this month. *Modern Jazz Performances Of Songs From My Fair Lady* (★★★★, CRAFT RECORDINGS LP) is a piano trio-led interpretation of tracks from the Lerner & Loewe musical, recorded in 1956 by **SHELLEY MANNE & HIS FRIENDS** (his friends being André Previn and Leroy Vinnegar). This was a huge hit at the time and deservedly so – who knew cuts like a Latin-inflected 'I Could Have Danced All Night' could swing so hard? From a year later, we have **You Get**

More Bounce With Curtis Counce! (★★★, CRAFT RECORDINGS LP) by **THE CURTIS COUNCE GROUP**, the bassist and pals tackling numbers like 'Stranger In Paradise', 'How Deep Is The Ocean?' and a couple of Counce originals. This is assured post-bop jazz, laidback and cool – but if we're being honest, we're mostly here for the fabulous cheesecake artwork of a stethoscope wielding pin-up in the throes of, ahem, ecstasy.

As it's the season to be merry, we'll give a



quick nod to **DAVE BRUBECK**'s **A Brubeck Christmas** (★★★★, CRAFT RECORDINGS 2-LP), a solo piano work from 1996 that sees the jazz legend tackle festive standards like 'Jingle Bells' in a delicate style and is therefore perfect for your eggnog party needs, before alighting on an all-time classic, **CHARLIE PARKER / DIZZY GILLESPIE / BUD POWELL / CHARLES MINGUS / MAX ROACH**'s **Hot House: The Complete Jazz At Massey Hall Recordings** (★★★★★, CRAFT 2-CD/3-LP). Recorded in Toronto in '53, the set is known as "the greatest jazz concert ever", during which the jazz greats give killer renditions of numbers such as 'Perdido' and 'Salt Peanuts'. The set has been reissued over 100 times, and it's easy to hear why. This is a living, breathing testament to the power of jazz, and Craft's 70th anniversary reissue does the work proud, especially on the handsomely mounted three-disc set that features bonus cuts (including the concert without overdubs from Mingus), liners and photos galore. Gorgeous and essential.

reviews now

A multitude of new music

Sweet Liberation

GRUFF RHYS
Sadness Sets Me Free

★★★★

ROUGH TRADE CD/LP

Gruff Rhys is a busy man. Fifty-three years old, 35 if you only count the years spent making music, 25 albums under his belt. But that's just for boring peeps who care about numbers. Untiring inspiration is what truly matters, and over the past couple of years alone the former Super Furry Animals frontman has released his first solo album to reach the Top 10 (*Seeking New Gods*), collaborated with Tuareg rock group Imarhan, written a film soundtrack *(The Almond & The Seahorse*) and published a unique autobiography-via-cardboard-signs (the highly recommended *Resist Phoney Encores*).

New full-length *Sadness Sets Me Free* finds him in top form. Title and lyrics seem to reflect our time's hardly conquered openness towards melancholy, whether it relates to intimate feelings, existential pondering or political frustration (all topics the album is skilfully concerned with). But *Sadness Sets Me Free* delights in subtle contradiction: where one would expect languid malaise there is uplifting, deeply humane quirky pop; accepting the bleakness of the times doesn't stop the Welsh singer-songwriter – and, together with him, those who are listening – from closing on a comforting, inspiriting note with the singalong-ready, moving 'I'll Keep Singing'. Lush, alleviating strings storm in when the songs speak of relatable darkness. The most politically engaged numbers also come in unexpected shapes. 'They Sold My Home To Build A Skyscraper' marries its compelling sense of purpose ("keep on singing of dictators that do wrong") to Tropicalia-imbued breeziness. With its anthemic flair ("as the government lie when they just can't win an argument with their ungovernable lies, maybe it's time for a feelgood reinvention"), 'Cover Up The Cover Up' could have easily unleashed a biting sonic attack; instead, it materialises as a soft-spoken, lulling ballad, its message ringing all the more powerful for it.

Sadness Sets Me Free brims with a sense of discovery and offers a familiar blend of melody, humour and romanticism (the quintessentially Gruff 'Celestial Candyfloss', one of the album's instant highlights) as well as some surprises (like the country detour of the title track). It's another high point in an ever-inspired career.

Camilla Aisa

Close encounters of the Gruff kind

EMMA ANDERSON
Pearlies

★★★★★

SONIC CATHEDRAL CD/LP/CASS

It's hard to believe this is Anderson's solo debut, not only because she's been a musician for over 35 years (most notably co-fronting shoegaze pioneers Lush), but also because it's so consistently excellent.

Lush's familiar DNA is very present on songs like 'I Was Miles Away' but given a haunted electronic setting by producer James Chapman (Maps) that mines a distinctly contemporary form of nostalgia. Ingredients include featherlight folk, '80s pop, girl-group melodrama and classic film soundtracks, as on 'Inter Light' on which Vashti Bunyan meets Kim Wilde on a John Barry score, and it somehow works brilliantly. 'Willow And Mallow' mixes *The Wicker Man* with '70s library music – Suede's Richard Oakes plays a Hank Marvin-esque solo – while 'Tonight Is Mine' and 'For A Moment' are rooted in the everyday but bleed strange colours while teetering on vertiginous precipices. Far from trading on past glories, *Pearlies* is a modern dream-pop masterpiece.

Ben Graham

ASTRAL SON
Mythos

★★★★

HEADSPIN LP

Enigmatic Dutch studio wizard Astral Son returns after a five-year hiatus with his fifth album of immaculately crafted, tastefully trippy progressive psychedelia.

If you enjoy the high-gloss Pink Floyd pastiches of early Porcupine Tree then you'll know what to expect from sinuous songs like 'Nothing Remains', featuring Barrett-esque chord changes over a motorik groove, or the amorphously aquatic adventures of 'Fishes'. 'Riding On A Cloud' mixes things up a bit, with lounge-jazz organ meandering over a bed of tablas before chiming guitars lead us spacewards, and 'River Flow' is krautrock with a hint of Tuareg desert blues. The lyrics throughout are appropriately acid-soaked, with 'Wall Of Illusion' and 'Hazy Shades' increasingly yearning to put the lessons learnt while tripping to use in what we laughingly call reality. With our man in Groningen playing all the instruments as well as singing softly, this is a worthwhile excursion into mythic musical dreamtime.

Ben Graham

RITA BRAGA
Illegal Planet

★★★★

COMETS COMING LP

Portuguese psych chanteuse Rita Braga's fourth LP might just be the one that brings her genuinely idiosyncratic style to a broader public. If you like your LPs bookended with samples from *Star Trek,* peppered with references to animals (magical or otherwise), made up of a sound palette utilising 50-year-old drum machines, E-bows and waterphones, and veering from the ethereal to the sound of a dystopian carnival, you're very much in luck.

Illegal Planet starts with a space-age take on the jazz trio sound, Braga crooning over ponderous bass and vibraphones, before expanding its palette to include a take on Tropicalia ('Flores Indigestas', with its partially AI-generated video), and even a psychedelic protest song ('Ikea Snow'). A guest spot from Phil MFU (Vanishing Twin, The Pigeons) on 'Astro Rumba' should let you know what sort of ride you're in for. An engrossing disc that somehow reveals more layers with each listen.

Christopher Budd

COMA GIRLS
Crystal Pistol

★★★

BABY ROBOT DIGITAL

Chris Spino, the LA singer-songwriter who is Coma Girls, describes *Crystal Pistol* as a pre-therapy "trauma dump" dealing with themes of addiction and recovery as he enters his mid-30s clean and sober. All very laudable, but potentially a gruelling listen for uncommitted listeners. Additionally, Spino's voice is unavoidably similar to Bright Eyes' Conor Oberst, and the combination of confessional lyrics with moody ballads that suddenly burst into flailing distorted noise recalls the dated tropes of noughties emo.

Things improve when Spino's words are cuttingly ironic rather than mopey, as on 'Back To The Source', driven by a perky drum machine and keyboards, while '33' evokes Big Star at their most wracked and desolate. 'Never Better' is fuzzy Teenage Fanclub-style indie-rock, but the clunky 'Yellow Kitchen' is the 2023 equivalent of the self-indulgent, navel-gazing '70s songwriter school of James Taylor etc. Get it out of your system, lad, and move on.

Ben Graham

COSMIC SHADOWS
Cosmic Shadows
★★★

SOUND EFFECT LP

Hailing from Athens, Cosmic Shadows have put together a debut offering full of grit, presence and wonderful imperfections.

The rather loud bass and reverb-heavy guitar of its introductory track is a great foretaste of things to come, with that texture carrying into album opener proper 'I Had A Dream' and the introduction of Jon Mitropoulos's snarling vocal (and where we're treated to a nice bit of fuzz bass). The whole of Side One clips along in similar style, from the punky chug of 'Devils' Dream' to the shuffle of 'Satisfy' via stand-out track 'Mr Thomas', which somehow seems to imagine Tame Impala covering Johnny Kidd & The Pirates. The flip is somewhat more psychedelic, less garagey, from the hypnotic, introspective 'Lopi' to the Floydy closer 'I Can't See'. An accomplished debut disc from a band that sounds like a great live proposition – hopefully on these shores soon?

Christopher Budd

DRESSEL AMOROSI
Spectrum
★★★★

FOUR FLIES LP

The coming together of jazz pianist/composer Valerio Lombardozzi AKA Heinrich Dressel (his kosmische alias) and Goblin bassist Federico Amorosi is a match made in soundtrack heaven. And for their latest outing *Spectrum,* they've abandoned the heavier sounds of debut *DeathMetha* and opted for something that falls somewhere between the hauntology of Ghost Box Records and the cinematic jazz-synth sounds of the '70s.

With the sinister tones dialled down, it is the funk that takes centre stage here, combined with a much greater focus on jazz and jazz-fusion – even a smattering of disco. This is more Carpenter than Goblin – heavy on the bass and deep in the groove – as Amorosi's basslines bump along with Lombardozzi's playful synth to create a collection of instrumental pieces that sit amongst the growing pantheon of nostalgic, synth-driven '70s-inspired pseudo-soundtracks. They've even designed the artwork to echo those classic library releases. Glorious.

Sarah Gregory

THE EXBATS
Song Machine
★★★★

GONER LP/DIGITAL

Father and daughter team of Kenny and Inez McLain expand their Exbats to a four-piece and return with their fifth full-length outing *Song Machine*, an album that celebrates the time when the seven-inch single reigned supreme.

'Riding With Paul' conjures forth Manfred Mann, specifically a jauntier 'Pretty Flamingo', and 'To All The Mothers I'd Like To Forgive' is Helen Shapiro fronting Blondie, who, with passable impersonations of both Debbie Harry and Clem Burke, also loom large over 'Himbo'. 'You Got My Heart Hot' sounds like Sonny & Cher's countrified follow-up to 'I Got You Babe', while 'Easy To Be Sorry' is a laidback Left Banke. 'Singalong Tonight' will, alas, never be covered by Ronnie Spector but could have been written for her – the same could be said of 'Food Fight' and Joey Ramone. Appropriately for a hymnal to the 45, every one of *Song Machine*'s 13 tracks is a hit single in waiting.

Peter Gallagher

THE FALLEN LEAVES
Simple Songs For Complex People
★★★★

PARLIAMENT LP

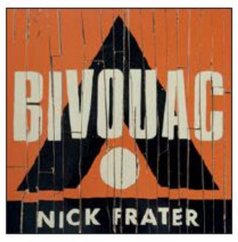
As they near their 20th year, West London's self-proclaimed purveyors of "punk-rock for gentleman" go from strength to strength. This is their sixth album and as always is released on their own label, in keeping with a strict adherence to the spirit of DIY.

From the opening thrill of 'Begin Again' – with its cheeky 'I Can't Explain' / 'I'm Rowed Out' lift – to the final slow burn of 'Closer To Me', this is as near to pop-punk perfection as it gets. The album has more hooks than a pirate convention, the backing vocals are spot on throughout, the production is raw, rough and ready, and there's plenty of variety throughout. 'Green Eyes' is an instant singalong classic that would've been Top 40 chart material in 1978, ''Most Of The Time' is The Action in a suburban garage around the same time and there's plenty more where that came from. Marvellous stuff.

Hugh Dellar

NICK FRATER
Bivouac
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD



Looking for a highly melodic, post-industrial age concept album about wanting to live off-grid in a wood due to feeling let down by successive Tory governments? Then this is the album you need to hear. Whether you're into short sharp powerpop tunes, or immersive conceptual suites, this 11th long-player by the Croydon tunesmith will surely win you over. Across its free-flowing 23 tracks Frater pulls out all the stops. There are ornate orchestrations, crisp harmonies, occasional electronic experimentation, recurring hooks and Mellotrons aplenty.

With tuneful heavyweights such as Roger Joseph Manning Jr (Beck/Jellyfish), Luke Smith (Ulysses) and Joe Kane (The Poppermost) offering to help, it's not surprising that Frater eschewed his usual at-home recording this time, favouring instead the collaborative opportunities provided by a large room studio. Although inspired by disillusionment and the depressing state of UK politics, *Bivouac* is a playful and ultimately uplifting feast of earworms.

Duncan Fletcher

THE GIANT ROBOTS
Fuzz You!
★★★★

GROOVIE LP / DIGITAL

For a Swiss outfit singing in French and Italian on a Portuguese record label, Giant Robots sure know their British and American rock 'n' roll, as demonstrated by the panoply of possible influences on fourth album *Fuzz You!*

Mashing musical locations and eras seems to be their thing, with 'Nowhere To Hide' transposing the '60s San Francisco of Jefferson Airplane to CBGBs in its prime, and 'Avanti La Macchina' reimagining The 100 Club on Matthew Street at its Merseybeatiest. The Robots also know when not to mess around, so their reading of The One Way Street's 1967 nugget 'We All Love Peanut Butter' sounds fresh but stays parked in the garage. Even the liner notes have a retro cool vibe. "This is an album to enjoy! To dance to! But it is also an album for connoisseurs". I'll let the connoisseurs decide that last part, but the rest is unequivocally bang on.

Peter Gallagher

The Giant Robots. Fuzzy round the edges

THE JAMES CLARK INSTITUTE
Under The Lampshade
★★★★

ROOM 5 LP

Just as not everyone can carve a perfect circle by hand, so not everyone should be expected to reinvent the wheel. *Under The Lampshade* is 10 songs about love – unrequited, unrecognised, unwanted, or unexpected – and all its emotional complications, written and created by master craftsmen in the melodic pop-rock field.

'Phantom Girl' includes lyrical nods to The Boomtown Rats, The Cars and Elvis Costello, all of whom are likely influences, and piano-led, orchestrated ballads 'Tornado' and 'I Brought You Home' sit comfortably alongside crunching guitar numbers like 'Hit Hollywood' and 'No Good Deed Goes Unpunished'. The Ontario band are musical anglophiles who could've happily signed to Stiff Records in 1978, but they also look stateside to the likes of Tom Petty, They Might Be Giants and Cheap Trick. Pop music ain't broke, so why try to fix it, when you can serve it up as good as new, just like this?

Ben Graham

THE JASMINE MINKS
We Make Our Own History
★★★

LAST NIGHT FROM GLASGOW/SPINOUT NUGGETS LP

The first album in 22 years from the ex-Creation legends opens with the punchy Attractions-flavoured 45 'She Knows'. Memorably infectious, it sets the tone for the band's most accomplished collection of songs to date. The compositions are almost universally strong with country-tinged ballads and virtuosic musicianship, a feature of the Minks' sound that always set them apart from their C86 contemporaries.

The harmonies on 'Kill' swoon and swagger in equal measure, while the orchestral soar of 'Skyward' drips with confidence and purpose, but the album builds its real momentum on Side 2 with the chiming title track (a #1 in *that* parallel universe) and the buoyant 'Gotta Move On' with its searing guitars and singalong chorus. 'Fatally' is an exquisite shimmering philosophical ballad with Jim Shepherd crooning like an angel, while closer 'When They Fall' miraculously blends swirling psych atmospherics with what sounds like a lost Triffids-style Antipodean sea shanty.

Johnnie Johnstone

THE JIM JONES ALL STARS
Ain't No Peril
★★★★

AKO-LITE CD/LP

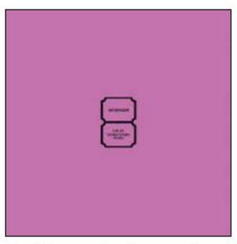
Following in the footsteps of Black Moses, The Jim Jones Review and Jim Jones & The Righteous Mind, the unstoppable JJ ups the ante with his latest incarnation as The Jim Jones All Stars by opting for maximum roots authenticity and recording in Memphis, Tennessee, the cradle of rock 'n' roll, blues and southern soul.

It's a move that makes perfect sense on every level imaginable as can be heard throughout the remarkable strength in depth of the resulting 12-track album on which the All Stars horn section is heard working serious overtime. What we have here is a frenzied garage-soul spectacular, generously seasoned with shots of R&B, blues and gospel that reels in hints of The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, The Bad Seeds, the ghost of Screamin' Jay Hawkins and legions of other attendant spirits. All hail the power of the mighty All Stars.

Grahame Bent

KHRUANGBIN
Live At Sydney Opera House
★★★★

DEAD OCEANS CD/LP



In late 2022 Texas purveyors of exquisite smooth fusion Khruangbin made their debut as headliners at The Opera House in Sydney. Judging by this recording of the trio's big night you'd probably picture them in a small club, such is the ease with which they survey their successful discography and pick old and new favourites to play.

"Turn to the person sitting or standing next to you and introduce yourself," they instruct from the stage before calmly launching into 'August 10', one of the highlights from 2018's breakthrough *Con Todo el Mundo*. It's a good summary of the night's mood: relaxed, blissfully lost in the groove (so much so that you'll often forget there's an audience about to clap). In just a few years, Khruangbin have honed a perfectly recognisable – and abundantly imitated – style; this live album is a perfect reminder of just how soothing and utterly pleasant it is.

Camilla Aisa

LAMP OF THE UNIVERSE
Kaleidoscope Mind
★★★★

SOUND EFFECT CD/LP

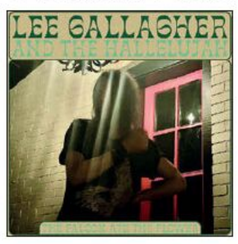
One-man cottage industry Craig Williamson has been bending minds and transporting listeners to higher streams of consciousness for over 20 years. His latest incarnation once again travels back in time to heady days of sitars, Mellotrons, flutes, tablas, tamburas – your standard Incredible String Band bag of trips. Repetitive musical mantras, krautrock grooves, sleepy vocals, throbbing walls, hallucinogenic light effects and paint-peeling fuzz wailers combine to expand your kaleidoscopic mind. You'll hear and see things that may not exist except inside your navel (or third eye).

Elastic time warps make 'Ritual Of Inner Light''s 10 minutes seem like 10 hours, 'Procession' ebbs and flows around flanged electronics and flutes, 'Immortal Rites' recalls Ravi Shankar at his chantingly somnambulistic best, and 'Transfiguration' ventures deliciously into 'Tomorrow Never Knows' territory. Joss sticks and headphones highly recommended.

Jeff Penczak

LEE GALLAGHER & THE HALLELUJAH
The Falcon Ate The Flower
★★★★

CLEAN LIVIN' CD/LP



Ohio-born Gallagher formed The Hallelujah in San Francisco, where he'd go on to release two well-received albums of spiritual country-rock. Newly resident in Nashville since COVID, Gallagher now has a third full-length album. It's a mostly live-in-the-studio affair, made with help from his West Coast pals who include members of GospelbeacH, Wolfmother and The Moldy Peaches. Together they're a highly expressive outfit, the perfect unit to back Gallagher's distinctive and soulful voice, and to help flesh out the dynamics of his heart-on-sleeve songs.

It's the addition of violin, played by none other than Scarlet Rivera (as heard on Bob Dylan's *Desire/* Rolling Thunder Revue Tour), that lends an extra layer of emotion and a direct link to an era that's informed a large part of Gallagher's musical DNA. With its cosmic Americana vibes and songs that are rich in story and imagery, this is the best country-rock you'll hear this year.

Duncan Fletcher

PAUL LUSH
Six Ways From Sunday
★★★

KALOO KALAY LP

Australian-born Lush has been an in-demand guitar player on London's roots and country scene for the last couple of decades, working with artists such as Alan Tyler (The Rockingbirds), and Danny & The Champions Of The World. A loose collective of friends working under the name Araluen has been his outlet for his solo songs previously, with 2021's *And There It Is* their most recent release. It featured vocals by Angela Gannon of The Magic Numbers.

Six Ways From Sunday sees Lush take all lead vocals. His delivery is refreshingly understated and unflashy, almost conversational as he wrestles with romantic complications, regrets, and the possibility of old flames being reignited. Lush is clearly a gifted six-string maestro, but his playing here always serves the song, and leans towards taste and restraint rather than being needlessly showy. An occasional touch of mandolin and pedal steel further enhance Lush's anglicised urban country-rock.

Duncan Fletcher

VIC MARS
The Beacons
★★★★

CLAY PIPE CD/LP

Armed with Moog and Mellotron – to which live drums and flute are suggestively added – Herefordshire-born Vic Mars invites listeners to a sonic expedition into the wilderness of Wales. It's a fascinating ride with both nature and local legends as omniscient guides.

A deep connection with childhood is another key influence of these tracks (the warm electronics of 'Pen Y Fan' dig in the past to find memories of family outings). As any lover of the great outdoors will tell you, light and dark, the serene and the sinister, have a tendency to remain in close proximity. Full of wonders from start to finish, *The Beacons* seems to reflect exactly that: there is something enticingly ominous about cuts such as 'Corn Du', while 'Memorial Cairn', 'Sandstone And Fern' and album highlight 'Cwm Llwch' unveil some sort of archaic magic at play, and bring to mind instrumental passages from Belbury Poly's outdoors-cum-myth outings.

Camilla Aisa

MARIE QUEENIE LYONS
SOUL FEVER
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THE PETS
S/T
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COLUMNA DE FUEGO
DESDE ESPAÑA...
Their only LP, recorded in Spain and released in Colombia only in 1974, was a turning point in the history of Colombian rock, and album full of funk, soul, cumbia and currulao. LP/Digital

WE ALL TOGETHER
II
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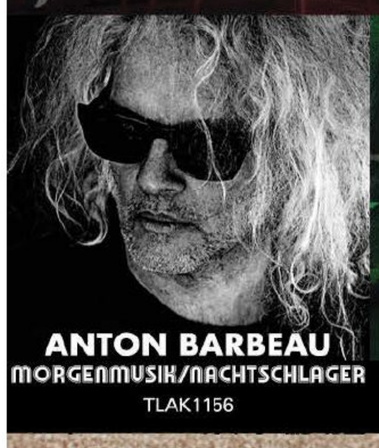

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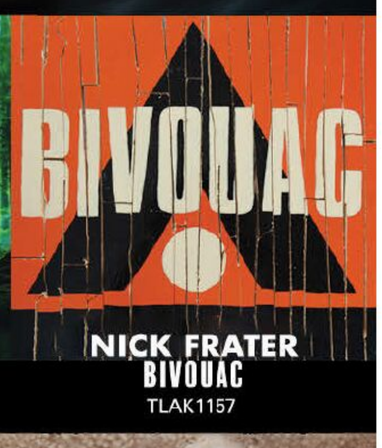

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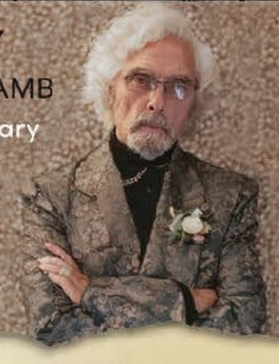

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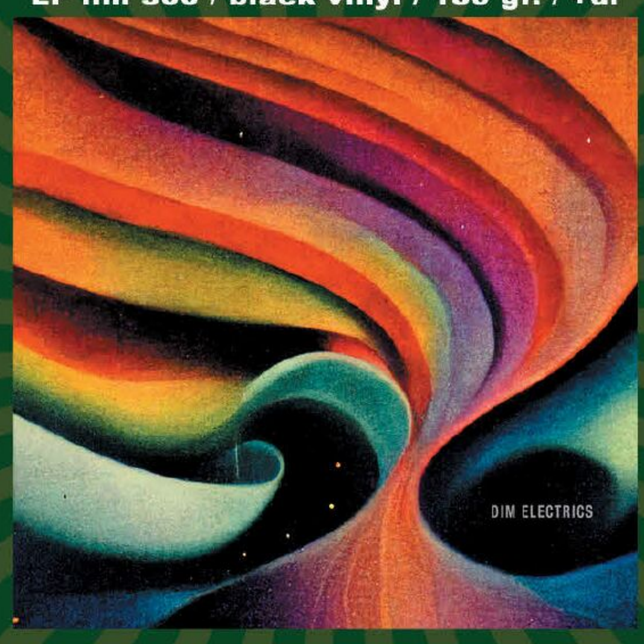

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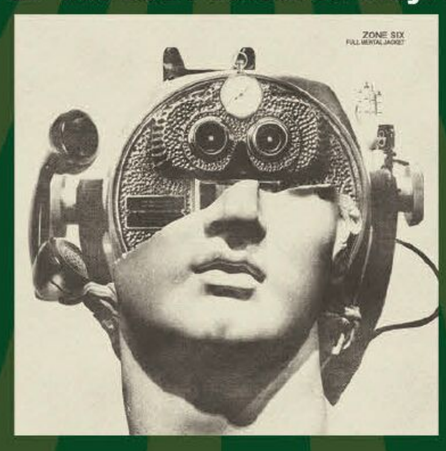

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MONDE UFO
7171
★★★★

FIRE CD/LP

Los Angeles-based duo Monde UFO are one of those acts whose sense of sonic inquisitiveness is so genuine and assimilation of styles so instinctive they not only end up creating new music that defies categorisation, but they can also make old favourites barely recognisable and entirely their own.

Such is the case with this new release from Fire Records, a reissue of Monde UFO's 2021 album *7171* accompanied by additional tracks: four reworks of Fugazi tunes. Listening to *7171*, you'd hardly draw a connection to a band like Fugazi – the sound of Monde UFO belongs to abstract experimentalism, to a love of freeform space-scouting jazz ('Cosmic Trigger'), to slow-burning ethereal psychedelia punctuated by barely-out-of-sleep vocals ('Lowered Shelf'), to exotica and haunted vintage soundtracks ('Weathered Underground'). At heart, though, it is omnivorous, boundary-pushing music. The newly added Fugazi cuts – not simply covered, but lovingly reimagined – make perfect sense.

Camilla Aisa

OCTOPUS SYNG
Smoke Green Mirror
★★★★

PIGEON CULT CD/LP

This excellent sixth album from Finnish musician Jaire Pätäri is an immersive experience in an otherworldly sonic universe.

Opening track 'Constant Music' sets the scene with a lead vocal that drifts through a haze of chiming guitars and spectral keyboards. Where the emphasis of that song is on mood it is melody that dominates the idiosyncratic pop of 'Drop Out' and 'Queen Of Blue Shadows'. The sound of this album owes much to early Pink Floyd but there are some arresting innovations throughout, from the percussive sound of a manual typewriter on 'You're My Magic Girl' to the clanging instrumental 'Gamelan Music With Three Empty Beer Cans And Other Household Items'. There's also a striking fusion of surf guitar and psychedelia on the knowingly titled 'Once We Were Almost Innocent'. The album ends on 'Starlight', an incantatory nine-minute epic that is a perfect showcase for Pätäri's richly textured and dreamlike sound.

Clive Webb

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
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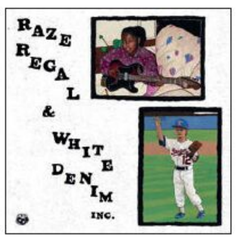
RAZE REGAL & WHITE DENIM INC
Raze Regal & White Denim Inc
★★★

BELLA UNION LP



Here's a new duo to keep an eye on. Electric guitarist Raze Regal and White Denim vocalist James Petralli have joined forces to create an unforgettable and exciting debut album. Borne out of the uncertainty and anxiety of the pandemic, the self-titled album is an uplifting, jazzed, fuzzed sprawl, infused with funk, alt-rock and psychedelia. With a solid knowledge of music history, Regal and Petralli take immense care not to produce pastiche; they know which pitfalls to avoid and they zig where we'd expect them to zag.

Although their eyebrow-raising debut is a shock to the senses, they never succumb to mere absurdity. If you were to stumble upon any of these tracks on the radio, you'd probably scramble to find the artist; the catchy opacity hooks you. Through dramatic tempo changes, arpeggiating guitar, and Petralli's faraway voice, the album goes beyond achieving its aims.

Tess Carges

RIVAL SELF
Rival Self
★★★★

SOUNDWEIGHT LP

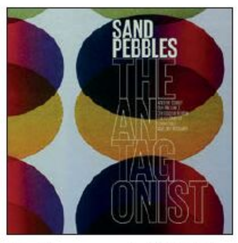
If, like this writer, you've ever wondered what the soundtrack to *Apocalypse Now* would sound like if it was directed by Timothy Leary and set in another dimension, your wait is over. Exploring themes ranging from existentialism and the environment to modern distraction and mental health, this much anticipated debut from south coast turntable-musician Rival Self is a crate-digger's dream/nightmare.

Stitching together spoken-word over meticulously crafted tracks, this is a producer who understands and respects the canons of psychedelia and hip-hop in equal measure, re-contextualising the stoned philosophy of Eric Burdon and metaphysical wanderings of Alan Watts side-by-side with snippets of wordplay by Rakim, Blackalicious *et al*. Comparisons with Mo'Wax-era DJ Shadow/UNKLE and those who use old records to espouse social commentary on modern life will inevitably be drawn. Even so, Rival Self avoids temptation to pay overt homage, crafting something thought-provoking and unique, blending dusty and digital. File under: dystopian fresh.

Seán Casey

THE SAND PEBBLES
The Antagonist
★★★★

CAREER CD/LP



There's an extraordinary backstory to Sand Pebbles which is almost as fanciful as some of the plot lines they once dreamed up. Formed in Melbourne in 2001 by three scriptwriters from the soap *Neighbours*... well how much more surreal do you want this story to get? Perhaps the greatest twist in the tale is that their exciting brand of psychedelic rock created the momentum for six albums in Australia leading to this, their first international release.

The band's *raison d'etre* is elegant simplicity. Their songs typically contain two or three chords at most but so masterful are the arrangements – layers of shimmering guitars, chugging strings and celestial vocal effects – you're soon lost in their magical, hypnotic world. The centrepiece here is 'Field Of The Lord', a majestic seven-plus minute psyche anthem about the fear of death. It already sounds like a campfire classic and will leave you hungry to turn on, tune in and dope out.

Chris Twomey

SHŪKO NO OMIT
Secret Memoir
★★★

RAMBLE CD/LP

A fitting title if there ever was one, *Secret Memoir* feels like an aural document that's eager to exist out of time, submerged in a thick cloud of mystery. Maybe it has to do with the group that recorded it – a family affair made of brothers Yonju Miyaoka and Taiju Sugimori and cousin Yuya Yamazaki that disbanded after playing just a handful of shows.

Impenetrable fogginess is imbued in the very sonic tapestry of the record, a collection of improvisations that translate a keen interest in embracing mistakes (elements that are usually omitted, as reflected in the band's interlingual choice of name), as well as Yonju Miyaoka's experience with schizophrenia, into abrasive post-post-Velvets lo-fi sculptures which give the impression that they could come apart at any moment. Halfway between bad trip psychedelia and stoned-out post-rock, the intriguing (if lengthy) journey of *Secret Memoir* is one for lovers of jagged, hissy bare-bones sonics.

Camilla Aisa

BOBBY SUTLIFF
Bob Sings And Plays
★★★★★

CAREER CD

The former singer/songwriter/guitarist in well-respected '80s power popsters The Windbreakers launched a solo career in 1987, releasing five albums over the next two decades before joining Montana psychedelicists Donovan's Brain for 10 albums. In 2016 he began recording what would be his final album before his untimely passing from kidney cancer last year.

Sutliff's jingle-jangle pop sensibilities are immediately apparent on tracks like 'Come On Home', the heart-breaking 'Let It Go', and the melancholic 'It All Fades Away.' His six-and 12-string interplay shines throughout with tasteful solos woven into a tapestry of memorable hook-laden tunes evoking The Byrds, Tom Petty and Green Pajamas. A brilliant cover of Fahey's 'Poor Boy A Long Way From Home', the pure powerpop perfection of 'The Man Who Wrote Home Sweet Home', and stunning closer '12th Of February' cap this fitting testimony to a brilliant career cut mercilessly short.

Jeff Penczak

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Library Archive Volume 3
★★★

ATA LP

This one is a bit of a mystery. *The Library Archive Volume 3* is an ambiguous, shape-shifting addition to ATA's Library trilogy. The term "library" refers to the music's vaulted shelf-life; these are songs written to be used by (typically B-list and below) film, radio, or commercial studios. Often referred to as "day-to-day music", library songs are a sort of minimalist soundscape – like elevator music from space. And though it had its heyday in the '70s, labels like ATA are devoted to preserving its strange legacy.

ATA heads Neil Innes and Pete Williams write and oversee the library archives and try to replicate the recording measures of old. Recorded exclusively on tape, using nameless instrumentalists, the collection reimagines 21st century background music. There's something generous and even hopeful about this task; the unnamed artists present a tabula rasa, open to interpretation, manipulation and all sorts of use. We'll have to wait and see where these tracks find their next life.

Tess Carges

guerssen

THE DAILY FLASH
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A compendium of garage, psych and folk-rock.

MAJIC SHIP
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Pulse (LP)
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THE ARTWOODS
Art Gallery (LP)
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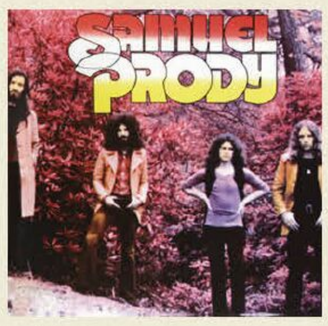
PODER DEL ALMA
Poder Del Alma (LP)
Hot psychedelic latin-funk from Nicaragua in the 70s.



SAMUEL PRODY
Samuel Prody (LP)
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Rumplestiltskin (LP)
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The Celibate Rifles
The Turgid Miasma Of Existence LP

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The Fuzztones
Live At The Dive '85 LP/CD

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This releases capturing the band's last performance there, before heading off for their first European tour to promote their recently released album, Lysergic Emanations.
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OUT SOON!
The Mosquitos
In The Shadows LP

With a winning combination of pop hooks and melody, the group became darlings of NYC's legendary 80s garage scene.
Here we find every studio recording they ever did: demo tapes from 1982 and 1983, a home PortaStudio demo, better mixes of their 1985 EP, and never-before released studio sessions.
180 grams vinyl comes with a two-page insert, plus digital download.

THE BELLES
Melvin / Come Back
★★★★

NUMERO GROUP

As anyone with even the most passing interest in '60s garage sounds will know, there were four or five staple tracks that pretty much every band had a stab at, regardless of their musical talent – or lack thereof. Setlists across the US of A were littered with covers of 'Louie Louie', 'I Can Only Give You Everything', 'Gloria' and so on.

On their second 45, original copies of which now regularly change hands for £300+, The Belles, from north Miami Beach, managed to both adapt and subvert Them's lascivious paean to teenage lust, turning it into a slow, grinding, primal throb about a hunk with an unusual name who's "about six feet four from his head to the ground"! Turn the wax over and you get a similarly primitive pounder calling for the return of a lost lover. It's all held down by the most rudimentary drumming, but kills nonetheless.

Hugh Dellar

THE FAIRIES
You Win / Willy Nilly
★★★

SOLUTION

Colchester's finest exponents of mid-60s R&B, The Fairies created some pulverising examples of raw punk-styled beat like 'I'll Dance' for Decca and the thump and sizzle of the snarling 'Get Yourself Home' cut for HMV. The group also included legendary drummer John 'Twink' Alder, who played with such groups as The Pretty Things during their glorious psychedelic period, as well as notorious anarchic rockers The Pink Fairies and 1977 punks The Rings.

'You Win' was one of The Fairies' earliest recordings, taped in '64 by Mickie Most, yet it's lain dormant until now. Although less dynamic than their above-mentioned oeuvre, it could've been more impactful had Mr Most placed the guitars and drums higher in the mix, matching the volume of lead vocalist Dane Stevens. 'Willy Nilly' leans more towards the soulful end of the beat spectrum. It must be said that both sides, overall, are far tamer than what fans of the group might be expecting.

Lenny Helsing

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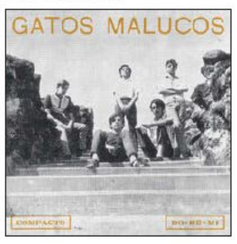
GATOS MALUCOS
Sem Ver O Luar EP
★★★

MUNSTER



Gatos Malucos translates as Crazy Cats in English, and the band, from the small city of Limera in the São Paulo countryside, were all aged between 14 and 16 when they cut their sole rare-as-hen's-teeth release in 1966.

They were captivated, like many millions of other teenagers around the world, by British Invasion acts like The Yardbirds and Zombies, but were also quite capable of penning originals. 'Sem Ver O Luar' ('Without Seeing The Moonlight') is a moody, melancholic teenbeat ballad with a great basic organ solo, whilst 'Garota snob' ('Snobbish Girl') is more up-tempo, yet still imbued with a slight downer vibe, and the guitar solo does a fair amount of work with really not a lot of technique! 'Fantasma' ('Ghost') is another track with great keening twin vocals, and finally 'Pluto' is probably the most Brazilian-sounding cut of the four, and none the worse for it.

Hugh Dellar

THE KILLING FLOORS
Too Far Gone / You Know It Ain't Right
★★★

OUTRO

Any band named after a Howlin' Wolf song are worth attention, and when that band has been getting rave reviews for its live shows over the last couple of years as well, the anticipation levels around a vinyl release are inevitably high. It's fair to say that this LA-based five-piece doesn't disappoint.

'Too Far Gone' starts off like a 1966 folk-punker before the swirling organ kicks in and the song heads off into a snotty teen-punk aggression and frustration that burns the chorus into the brain right from the off. On first listen, the admirable absence of any form of solo was striking, but later realised that this was maybe just down to the unusual mix and the fuzz guitar sitting way down under the organ lines.

The flipside is more of the same: crunchy teen beat that swings and shakes.

Hugh Dellar

NICHOLLAS MARIANO
Nao Adianta Nada / Dita Cuja
★★★

GROOVIE

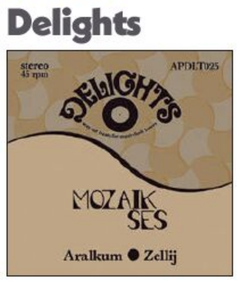
This 45 represents the complete recorded output of one Nichollas Mariano. Originally released in 1967, aside from its status as a bona fide collector's item, one of the most interesting things about this obscure example of Brazilian garage-pop is the story of how it actually came into being. Initially not a performer in his own right, Mariano was in fact the butler of singer Roberto Carlos (the king of Brazil's *Jovem Guarda* movement of the '60s) at the height of his fame.

Formerly a deejay, Mariano oversaw the choice of songs on his boss's albums, and in '67 Carlos apparently gave Mariano permission to record a single backed by the garage band Som Beat. While 'Nao Adianta Nada' might loosely echo the sound of early Os Mutantes waxings, 'Dita Cuja' offers a showcase of fuzzed-up moody nonchalance that was featured alongside other rarities on Beastie Boy Mike D's *Brazil 45* box set.

Grahame Bent

MOZAIK SES ARALKUM / ZELLIJ
★★★★

Delights



Psych-funk lovers of the world rejoice! The world's grooviest boutique label for far-out beat-heavy mayhem returns for their final release of the year – and it's a real doozy. As Markey Funk's Delights label has increased its stock amongst the global community so has the long list of collaborators grown to include the likes of Shawn Lee and Misha Panfilov.

This time around joining label head Markey Funk are Tel Aviv-based funk combo VuVuVu and legendary guitarist JJ Whitefield, founding member of the highly influential Poets Of Rhythm, The Whitefield Brothers and Karl Hector & The Malcouns. Between them they've conjured two exotic funk bombs that are overflowing with aural delights. 'Aralkum' is a trippy, swirling maelstrom of sounds underpinned by a killer groove, and 'Zellij' is an up-tempo, cinematic affair complete with Whitefield's heavy fuzz-wah guitar weaving its way through proceedings.

Paul Osborne

THE NIGHTFALLS
Don't Belong / Hook, Line & Sinker
★★★★

POP

'Don't Belong' is the debut double A-side from The Nightfalls, a London-based quartet comprising songwriter, producer and vinyl fiend Paul Orwell on vocals and rhythm guitar, former Pacers Harry Stam (lead guitar) and Paul Jarvis (bass), and sticksman Billy Pearson

How rock 'n' roll are The Nightfalls? 'Don't Belong' combines punky disenfranchisement with some classic Stones riffery, a blend of Larry Wallis meets Iggy vocals, a dash of MC5, and some fantastic fret melting and Entwistle-esque anchoring from Stam and Jarvis respectively. That's pretty damn rock 'n' roll, but what with the hair, the shades and the long black leather coat, Orwell even seems to be indulging in some Wallis cosplay just to drive the point home. 'Hook, Line & Sinker' could be a spectral slice of mid-60s R&B emanating from a darkened, haunted Marquee, and easily matches its flipside's ferocity.

Peter Gallagher

PALOOKA 5
Radio Telescopes EP
★★★★

SPINOUT NUGGETS

Palooka 5 love The B-52's, dress Captain Sensibly, and play their own brand of sci-fi surf. Anyone seeking the perfect soundtrack to hitting the waves at Poldhu Cove while strange news beams in to Goonhilly Earth Station from the black & white planets of Cybermen and Zarbi need look no further.

Wanna increase that vintage vibe by upping the theremin? Opener 'Chetsworth Motel' has you covered. 'Kerb Dog' flashes back a decade earlier for some '50s rock 'n' roll in the Blackpool Tower ballroom, and then there is 'Ket Ponies'. I can't make out the vocals, but is this really about anaesthetising horses prior to surgery? Are Palooka 5 trying to out-brucellosis Warren Zevon on the obscure animal health lyrics front? If so, hail, hail rock 'n' roll, indeed. Joe Meek is another inspiration, but I suspect the Palookas are having way more fun than the 'Telstar' man ever did.

Peter Gallagher

MARCOS VERMELHO
Gira-Gira / Parabéns, Meu Bem
★★★★

GROOVIE

Originally released on Polydor in 1969, Marcos Vermelho's sole 45 is soulful Brazilian pop with a definite proto-funk underpinning, best heard on the killer breakdown in the middle of 'Gira Gira'.

If music were movies, this would be a hip young couple of indeterminate racial origins (but clearly benefitting from living and loving in warmer climes), clad in mid-60s mod gear, riding through the streets of Rio de Janeiro to a party on a scooter, with Sugarloaf Mountain and the sea beyond. Arranged by Rogerio Duprat, the man once dubbed both "the George Martin of Tropicalia" and "the Brian Wilson of Brazil", the flipside is lazier, lusher and lovelier.

It comes sprinkled with some of the same orchestral magic Duprat brought to recordings by the likes of Os Mutantes, Gal Costa and Caetano Veloso, and heads out into the kind of soaring terrain that Tim Maia mined so well.

Hugh Dellar

THE UGLY'S
I've Seen The Light / Mary Colinto
★★★★
SOLUTION

Shrouded in mystery and surrounded by hearsay since its February 1969 (non) appearance, this final outing by Brummie warriors The Ugly's remains one of the most insanely scarce and valuable 45s of all time, with only a handful of promo copies being handed to band members just days before they chucked in the towel. Factor in the songwriting talent of David Morgan (soon to be co-opted by Carl Wayne for a short-lived publishing venture), Steve Gibbons' enigmatic lead vocal and Tony Cox's (Caravan, Trees) crunchy, widescreen production and you have the perfect musical storm.

'I've Seen The Light' (originally incorrectly titled 'I See The Light') is an unlikely topside: ominous prog-pop heightened by what sounds like a dual guitar/violin riff. 'Mary Colinto' (ditto, 'Mary Cilento') resembles The Kinks' 'David Watts' as rendered by The Move circa 'Omnibus'. (Carl Wayne had in fact sung Morgan's original demo.) Sadly, the underwater sound quality of 'Mary' renders it a curio rather than a classic, but this reissue is a sound investment nonetheless.

Andy Morten

VICKIE & THE VAN DYKES
I Wanna Be A Winner / Outcast
★★★★
NUMERO GROUP

As any good compilation should aspire to do, not only was *Basement Beehive: The Girl Group Underground* one of Numero Group's most inspired and exciting anthologies to date (which, admittedly, is saying a lot), but it also made for the discovery of some new faves. One of those was certainly Vickie & The Van Dykes, another memorable name from the ever impressing Cleopatra Records roster (whose mastermind, Tommy Falcone, has been described as a DIY Phil Spector from New Jersey).

The rousing 'I Wanna Be A Winner' gave Basement Beehive true rock 'n' roll creed. This should-have-been classic finally gets the reissue treatment it so clearly deserves, pressed on green marble seven-inch vinyl that is as striking and electric as Vickie's intonation. On the B-side is 'Outcast', a dramatic slice of teen angst powered by an inspired vocal performance. A subtle compromise between school-dance patterns and boiling '60s rebellion makes both cuts simply irresistible.

Camilla Aisa

tracks

CAMILLA AISA rounds up this month's digital downloads and stray oddities

June McDoom offers early morning blues and greens

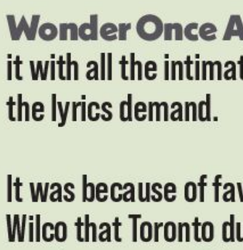
Our last Tracks expedition of 2023 begins with a string of imaginative, hearty covers. Jamaican-born, New York-based singer-songwriter **JUNE MCDOOM** takes a deep cut from an all-time favourite, Judee Sill's '**Emerald River Dance**', and turns it into an out-of-body revelation lulled by strings, harp and graceful vocals.

Julie Byrne follows up on her much-awaited return (the gorgeous, fittingly titled *The Greater Wings*) with an EP in collaboration with Taryn Blake Miller and Emily Fontana, as **LAUGH CRY LAUGH**. Nestled between three evocative originals is a haunting take on the much covered '**These Days**' that deconstructs the Jackson Browne/Nico melody and reassembles it as a modern piece of emotionally naked folk.

Fresh off of the release of Wilco's latest album (the Cate Le Bon-produced, forward-thinking *Cousin*), **JEFF TWEEDY** goes back to basics and pays an inspired homage to the great Bill Fay. A long-time fan, Tweedy picks a jewel from the now 80-year-old's musical renaissance, 2020's '**Filled With Wonder Once Again**', and renders it with all the intimate, wide-eyed warmth the lyrics demand.

It was because of favourites like Tweedy's Wilco that Toronto duo **DUCKS LTD** set their eyes on Chicago and decided they wanted their second album to take shape there. First single '**The Main Thing**' is the kind of modern powerpop belter filled with hooks and jangly guitars that has us quacking with delight.

Keep the timeless guitar pop hookiness (updated with contemporary sensibilities) and make it fuzzier. Alabama-raised, Bay Area-based writer and musician **BRONTEZ PURNELL** turns up the crunch level on '**Bachelors Theme**' and delivers a DIY anthem in the shape of a blast of kinetic energy that defies listeners to catch a breath.



Some months ago, reviewing **JOANNA STERNBERG**'s latest album – one of this year's very best, according to this writer – we saluted "a new, wonderfully idiosyncratic singer-songwriter great". '**Neighbors**', with its welcoming Judee Sill-meets-Randy Newman flair, can't help but reinforce that feeling. Hard not to sing along and smile widely.

You probably would assume that music inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's short stories should turn out brooding and gloomy. Well, think again because the mystery of **RE:EAP** lies somewhere else entirely – '**Rainbow Steps On The Shadows**', the first single off a Poe-loving double album, is a slice of colourful, free-flowing *avant*-pop. Deliciously circuitous.

Autumnal dreaminess permeates the sound of **UMARELLS**, a young new Manchester group with a name that would make Tony Soprano and cohorts beam. They started making up songs for fun between shifts at an Indian restaurant; now, a few years later, they offer the hazy bedroom-pop of '**Closer**', cradled by synths, shoegaze-enamoured guitars and lulling vocals.

Things get even more ethereal with the next number, a new track by LA-based multi-instrumentalist **NAILAH HUNTER**. With songs originating from demos recorded on a Celtic harp, her music lands somewhere between bewitching post-psych and ambient-leaning electronica. '**Finding Mirrors**' is a haunting piece about "seeing yourself without warning".

As they announce their first album in five years, **OMNI** unveil '**Exacto**', a song that opens with ready-to-get-stuck-in-your-head nervy guitar punch and only gets better from there. Brimming with wiry energy, it's an angular post-punk gem with strong powerpop and garage-rock roots.

Can't get enough of bouncy guitar music? Us neither. It is a pleasure, then, to make the acquaintance of **CHEMTRAILS**, another promising outfit hailing from Manchester. The brilliantly titled '**Detritus Andronicus**' takes rhythmic cue from The Bee Gees and rocks at the crossroads of garage, powerpop and anthemic queer-punk.

We sure love to rediscover a classic that never was. Back in the '80s, Stockton's **TORN BOYS** brewed gorgeous songs together for a just year before their members moved on to different endeavours (eventually founding beloved acts such as Shiva Burlesque, Grant Lee Buffalo and Gary Young's Hospital). '**See Through My Eyes**', with its romantic lyricism and psych-in-the-age-of-drum-machines charm, is a memorable first taste of their freshly uncovered output.

THE ART OF THE BIZARRE VINYL SLEEVE

Simon Robinson & Stephen Goldman

★★★★★

EASY ON THE EYE

This reviewer once worked in a charity shop where it was my thankless task to price records that could not be given away free. That included unwanted German oompah and Irish folk music with sleeve art featuring the players posing awkwardly in unflattering traditional attire.

None of that had prepared me for this outlandish compilation of some of the worst record covers ever made. Boldly going where no record collector has gone before, Stephen Goldman has assembled a disturbing but hilarious assortment of terrible sleeves. Everything you never wanted to see is on display here, from French glam-rock to chimeras seemingly torn from a Hieronymus Bosch canvas, to hirsute men posing naked with only a strategically located musical instrument to cover what should be their considerable shame.

There are so many candidates here that it is difficult to settle on the very best word record sleeve. Many shortlists will include Dutch vocalist Cock Van Der Palm and German schlager singer Kingsize Dick. Personally, I cannot erase the *second* disco album by Fofão, a Brazilian children's television character sublimely described by text author Simon Robinson as resembling "a dying *Star Trek* alien after a radiation leak". The absolute worst for me though are the Christian evangelical ventriloquists. Incredibly, there are three different acts presented here, the most astonishing of which has to be Erick And His Manipulator Beverly Massegee.

Never judge a record by its cover? On the basis of this book, you really should. Very, very funny, this is an absolute gem.

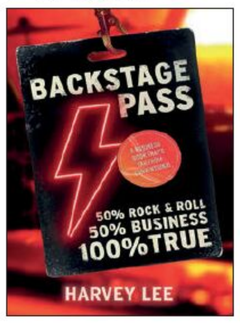
Clive Webb

BACKSTAGE PASS

Harvey Lee

★★★★★

DEFINITION



Imagine you're a roadie working with a bunch of fading British icons on their 1988 US tour. Their bass player suddenly announces he urgently needs to return to the UK for a family funeral and requests you stand in for him until he gets back. You shit yourself because, although you're a musician and know their set inside out, you've never thought of studying his bass parts. You now have a couple of hours to learn them before you face a sell-out crowd in Obscuresville, Minnesota.

This is precisely what happened to the 19-year-old Harvey Lee when he was touring with Herman's Hermits. One may be tempted to mock, but even in the late '80s the Hermits were still a pretty big deal in the States. In '65, let's not forget, they were briefly bigger there than The Beatles, and even without their charismatic frontman Peter Noone, they could still draw big crowds.

Harvey Lee's memoirs are extraordinary for one so young (mid-50s) because they incorporate close encounters with '60s legends and all sorts of other rock heroes, including The La's and the future Stranglers front man Baz Warne, during his long career as a studio engineer and manager. The road was never smooth, but the lessons Lee learned became an integral part of his future business strategy and success – after all, he now knew how to deal with some of the most fucked-up, dysfunctional people on earth!

Can't recommend this funny, absorbing, pacy – and, above all, unique – story enough.

Chris Twomey

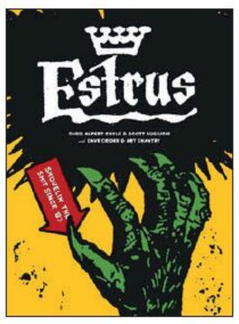
Jim Hendricks, Cass Elliot, Zal Yanovsky and Denny Doherty prepare for parenthood

ESTRUS: SHOVELIN' THE SHIT SINCE '87

Chris Alpert Coyle & Scott Sugiuchi with Dave Crider & Art Chantry

★★★★

KORERO PRESS



In 1987, The Roofdogs, an instrumental surf combo out of Washington state, dropped a cassette called *Pound Bound*, the first ever release on Estrus, a new label set up by their guitarist Dave Crider. Taking its name from the zoological term for the period when females are most sexually receptive, Estrus would grow into one of the key labels of the American independent scene, spewing out hundreds of garage/surf/punk platters from bands like The Makers, Drags, Woggles and Crider's own band The Mono Men, all filled with snot and piss, and marked with a primo visual aesthetic inspired by trash B-movies, stag mags, OG garage 45s, horror comics and hot rods, mostly under the direction of designer Art Chantry.

And here, in celebration of Estrus's lowbrow yesterdays, comes a hardback book stuffed full of artwork and imagery, charting the devilish highs and catastrophic lows of the label, including seven-inch subscription service Crust Club, their legendary Garage Shock weekenders, and the devastating fire that saw most of Estrus's stock go up in flames, all shot through with testimony from movers and shakers of the scene like Trent Ruane of The Mummies, Brian Teasley of Man Or Astro-Man? and Tim Kerr of Lord High Fixers (to name but one). Even the most perceptive of swamis couldn't have predicted back in '87 that Estrus would one day by the subject of such a handsome, almost *respectable* tome, but here it is, a gorgeous artefact that proves one can indeed polish a turd.

Thomas Patterson

GETTIN' KINDA ITCHIE: THE GROUPS THAT MADE THE MAMAS & THE PAPAS

Richard Campbell

★★★★★

SELF-PUBLISHED

The delightful 'Creeque Alley' was The Mamas & The Papas' three-and-a-half minute musical biography that told the tale of how they – and The Lovin' Spoonful – formed to become the much-loved vocal harmony quartet that epitomised the flower power generation of the '60s.

But Richard Campbell's splendid new book, the title of which is a line taken from the aforementioned song, goes into far more detail about how John Phillips, Cass Elliott, Denny Doherty and Michelle Phillips began their musical journeys that culminated in them eventually becoming The Mamas & The Papas, and it's totally absorbing.

We know about Cass and Denny's group The Mugwumps from, primarily 'Creeque Alley', and had vague recollections about The Journeymen, The Big Three and The Halifax Three, but this in-depth tome also touches on other ensembles, like The Abstracts, The Smoothies and The Triumvirate, all of whom played their part in moulding our heroes' musical sensibilities and honing their musical chops. All roads eventually led to them getting together, but it took a while, with some bumps along the way.

The 240-page book, by the world's leading expert on the group, also looks into the backgrounds of all four protagonists, providing details of where they grew up and how they got into the business, with a whole host of pictures depicting their timelines. It was fascinating to see Papa John as a fresh-faced youngster making a name for himself on the folk scene, before he grew his moustache and started taking LSD.

And a great final touch, is a "translation" of 'Creeque Alley', describing what each verse of the song means. Terrific.

Dom Picksley

THE GOLDEN VOICE: THE BALLAD OF CAMBODIAN ROCK'S LOST QUEEN

Gregory Cahill & Kat Baumann

★★★★

HUMANOIDS INC PB

Ros Serey Sothea rose from impoverished beginnings to become "The Golden Voice Of The Royal Capital", a glittering sobriquet bestowed upon her by Cambodia's ruler Prince Norodom Sihanouk. She became the country's most popular female singer in the late '60s and early '70s, an accolade she retains today. As well as a solo career encompassing a range of genres including traditional folk, big romantic ballads, garage and psych, she recorded a series of hugely successful duets with Sinn Sisamouth, Cambodia's favourite male singer both then and now. However, neither Sothea nor Sisamouth are alive to enjoy their continued success. They disappeared after Pol Pot came to power, along with 90% of Cambodia's musicians, victims of the Khmer Rouge's infamous Killing Fields.

Film-maker Gregory Cahill and artist Kat Baumann combine to tell Sothea's story in *The Golden Voice*, a 200-page graphic biography with a twist. Not surprisingly given Cahill's background, his perfect pacing and Baumann's storytelling prowess, the result is a motion picture in static form. As with Humanoids' recent Velvet Underground bio, the colouring is superlative; one can almost see the heat haze rippling in front of each panel.

The twist? The book comes with its own soundtrack. A QR code grants access to 47 songs by Ros Serey Sothea and other key names from the lost era of Cambodian rock. Play and pause symbols throughout the narrative informs the reader when and what to play. Perhaps one day, all books about musicians will be like this.

Peter Gallagher

TOMMY EMMANUEL CGP

10/01/24	EXETER CORN EXCHANGE
11/01/24	BATH FORUM
12/01/24	LONDON CADOGAN HALL
13/01/24	BEXHILL DE LA WARR PAVILION
14/01/24	SOUTHEND PALACE THEATRE
16/01/24	BURY ST EDMUNDS APEX
17/01/24	LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
18/01/24	SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION
19/01/24	GLASGOW CELTIC CONNECTIONS
21/01/24	BUXTON OPERA HOUSE
23/01/24	KINGS LYNN CORN EXCHANGE
24/01/24	SHREWSBURY THEATRE SEVERN
25/01/24	ST ALBANS ARENA
26/01/24	NEW BRIGHTON FLORAL PAVILION
27/01/24	HARROGATE ROYAL HALL

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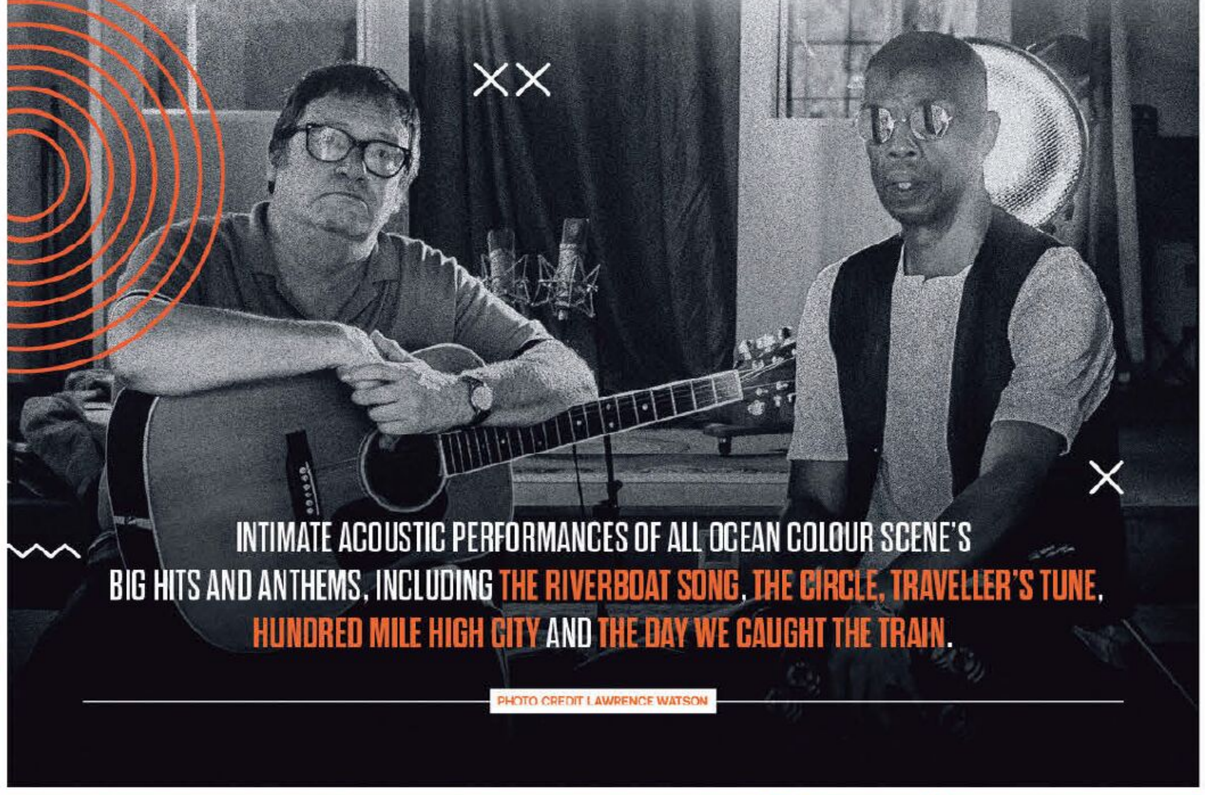
TEWKESBURY ROSES THEATRE 4TH APRIL	18TH APRIL LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
HARPENDEN ERIC MORECAMBE CENTRE 5TH APRIL	19TH APRIL CORBY CORE AT THE CUBE
SOUTHAMPTON TURNER SIMS 6TH APRIL	20TH APRIL STOCKTON ARC
EASTBOURNE ROYAL HIPPODROME 11TH APRIL	25TH APRIL NORWICH EPIC
BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX 12TH APRIL	26TH APRIL NORTHWICH MEMORIAL HALL
SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION 13TH APRIL	27TH APRIL COVENTRY HMV EMPIRE



INTIMATE ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCES OF ALL OCEAN COLOUR SCENE'S
BIG HITS AND ANTHEMS, INCLUDING THE RIVERBOAT SONG, THE CIRCLE, TRAVELLER'S TUNE,
HUNDRED MILE HIGH CITY AND THE DAY WE CAUGHT THE TRAIN.

PHOTO CREDIT LAWRENCE WATSON

HUGH CORNWELL

JANUARY 2024

17 BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX	24 BRIGHTON CONCORDE
18 NEWCASTLE BOILER SHOP	25 ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL
19 GLASGOW QMU	26 LEAMINGTON ASSEMBLY
20 HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME	27 FROME CHEESE & GRAIN

MOJO 4/4 STARS - "CORNWELL'S STILL DOING THINGS HIS WAY AND OFTEN WITH STRIKING RESULTS"

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HALF MAN HALF BISCUIT

Fri 9 Feb Newcastle Boiler Shop

Fri 12 April Coventry HMV Empire

Canine and able! The Make-Up, Exbats, The Jackets and Wau Y Los Arrrghs!!! bring the fun

PHOTOS: JEFF PITCHER

FUNTASTIC DRACULA PARTY

Penelope Club, Benidorm

THURSDAY 12TH-SATURDAY 14TH OCTOBER

The Union Jacked hordes have retreated from the beaches of Benidorm, replaced with shaggy heads, Cuban heels and Cramps t-shirts. Lots of Cramps shirts. This is the 18th year of the greatest three-all-day-all-night rock 'n' roll, punk and powerpop party on Earth.

New bands impress: **The Silly Walks**, garage-poppers who end their set in the audience; even the drummer sets up shop in the mosh pit. **The Mocks** from the Netherlands are sharp, their safari-suited guitarist darting about the stage Wilco-style. Arizona's excellent **Exbats,** with an intriguing father/daughter line-up, deliver sweet powerpop in the Redd Kross/Jellyfish tradition, rich and delicious. **Thee Cha Cha Chas** play cute ramalama rock 'n' roll – often topped off, satisfyingly and correctly, with a cha-cha-cha ending. Of the smaller bands, **The Okmoniks** are perhaps the most impressive; lead singer and organist Helene 33 leading her quartet through a set of chirpy, near-perfect trad-garage party blasters, like a hopped-up Helen Love.

The UK is represented by a clutch of bands and deejays: over in the Hipsville room there's thrills, spills and non-stop frolicking while on the main stage, the on-point **Eel Men** are tighter and slicker than previous outings, and zip through a spiky, taut set enhanced by their maracas player nonchanantly checking his mobile. There's slick pop from **The Speedways**, while Bristol's **The Mudd Club** shine with their hopped-up rockabilly and singer Sadie's throaty country vocals. Most striking of all, however, are **Lord Rochester.** Russ Wilkins and Saskia Holling's Diddley-doings are rapturously received by the crowd, and the band respond in kind with an incendiary, gleeful show.

The big hitters this year include **The Scientists**, whose post-punk throb brings a threat and darkness to proceedings. Near-local *Nugget*eers **Wau y los Arrrghs!!!** are hugely beloved; singer Juanito has reached national treasure status and is carried, screaming and hollering, shoulder high around the audience. Friday night's insane costume party is headlined by Swiss royalty **The Jackets**, whose show gets more commanding year-on-year. Iconic singer and guitarist Jackie rocks and literally rolls around the stage, chive-skinny legs aloft, cementing her place as queen of the garage.

Kid Congo & The Pink Monkey Birds rumble through a celebratory set that includes a stately run-though of The Cramps' 'Goo Goo Muck'. The highlight, however, is **The Make-Up**. This all-original line-up is just as funky and controlled as it was in the '90s, and lead singer Ian Svenonius is still the underground's Prince, walking across the crowd Iggy-style and transforming the dancefloor into a writhing, sexy mass.

Even when the bands are done, the fun never stops; three hours later, the same audience, hopped up on cheap booze and adrenalin, compete in Jonathan Toubin's legendary Soul Clap dance-off, where the crowd are the stars. Fangtastic!

Kate Hodges

WEYES BLOOD

The Greek Theater, Los Angeles

WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER

You'd be hard pressed to find a performer better suited for The Greek Theater than Weyes Blood. Nestled into a cranny of Griffith Park, the Greek appears magical, ancient, and brand new all at once. So too, does Natalie Mering AKA Weyes Blood. Unsurprisingly, her cool, piercing voice has found a fanbase in Los Angeles. Soaring to the stage in gown and cape, Mering seems keen to put on a show. Her voice is a one-two punch: jabbing us with piercing clarity, and then knocking us out with the way it swoops and swoons.

Mering started as a noise artist and has been refining and finessing her sound ever since. Although she found breakthrough success with her last two albums, she isn't afraid of playing older tunes or esoteric covers. She graces us with 'Diary,' a gorgeous selection from 2016 album *Front Row Seat To Earth*. The nagging build makes incredulous fools of us all. Her knack for melody and euphoric chord progressions is made all the lovelier by her frequent twirls onstage. With a lot of pride and excitement, Mering premieres her video for 'God Turn Me Into A Flower', which displays a dizzying array of iconography and captures her love of film and media.

Covering '50s standard 'Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing', Mering reminds us why her popularity is a magical, inexplicable fortune; not many popular artists can so easily be heard in the music of Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Dusty Springfield. Let's not question it. Let's just thank the lucky stars atop our heads.

Tess Carges

"The Make-Up's lead singer Ian Svenonius is still the underground's Prince, walking across the crowd Iggy-style and transforming the dancefloor into a writhing, sexy mass"

Friends of Bert. Jacqui McShee, Kevin Dempsey and Mike Piggott (above); Martin Simpson and Louis Campbell (this pic)

Transacoustic Guitars with Bernard Butler (above); Robert Plant and Saving Grace (this pic)

BOBBIE WATSON & JON SEAGROATT, SPIRAL GALAXY, ROSE IO

Walthamstow Trades Hall, London

SATURDAY 28TH OCTOBER

Cobwebs, spiders, and a giant *MOOF*-shroom greet us at tonight's sold-out event, as Rose io sings compelling vignettes that sonically evoke a sunlit clearing in a wood, but lyrically live in darker places; a delicious dichotomy that holds the audience spellbound. Sometimes *a capella*, sometimes keyboard-backed, echoes of ancient folk songforms, Syd-style chord changes and early '70s children's TV music abound, spun through with tales of underworld love, automata, churchyards and haberdashery. An amazing set, watch out for the new album coming soon.

Chicagoans Steven Krakow and Sara Gossett are Spiral Galaxy, psychedelic illustrators extraordinaire, and with guest guitarist Paul Milne provide a heady mix of dancing kosmische flute, keyboard ragas through delay and sampler pedals, Binson Echorec-style guitar, tamboura and drum machine. An ecstatic thrum, mirrored notes come through in waves and pulses, breaking apart and recombining like bubbles on an oil wheel until the mood grows more menacing on 'Volo Bog', pulling us into a howling vortex then out through the other side, balance restored by the warm comedown chords of 'Future Fauna'.

Comus' Bobbie and Jon bring us "re-imaginings" of 'In The Lost Queen's Eyes' and 'The Herald', slower and spacier than the originals, all skittering beats, double bass, treated brass and woodwind, a la Primal Scream's 'Echo Dek', a long-dazed journey through the night with Bobbie's crystal-clear vocals to guide us through. Elsewhere there's the manic, cavernously reverbed 'Frayed' and the gorgeous, cinematic "70 bpm" culminating in Jon's spooky strigine coda, and deejay Jack Sharp's excellent set. Kudos to Melanie of *MOOF* Magazine and all concerned for a unique solstice night out.

Stephen Wood

NICK CAVE

The Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles

SATURDAY 28TH OCTOBER

The apparition of these faces in the crowd. Filtering, stumbling, floating in: the romantics and the rioters. Waiting for their red right hand. And he arrives, "a tall handsome man in a dusty black coat". We unknowingly rise out of our seats, cheer, realise it isn't so much the place to cheer, sit, and wait for a voice far preferable than our own.

He begins the night with 'Girl In Amber', a song – like many of Cave's – that builds, iterates, hooks and claws at you. His deep voice and clamouring piano are complimented only by a bass. Radiohead bassist Colin Greenwood has accompanied Cave for the evening. It makes perfect sense why Cave would seek out Thom Yorke's thumper. Greenwood is a great accompaniment to the intense, swirling soothsayers. He stares at Cave in awe, like a bashful kid seeing Mickey Mouse in Times Square. He's just happy to be there, seemingly unaware of the sinister air.

Cave plays songs from across his catalogue, including some he's yet to record that are, as he tells us, "really very good". An especially great moment comes when Cave sings 'Shivers', a song written by his then-16-year-old bandmate Rowland S Howard while the pair were in The Boys Next Door, which then became The Birthday Party. His rendition is perfect; the ironic wit that has bolstered his career as a writer and performer all these years can be traced back to this ditty. His punk decadence persists, but it never masks his pain, struggle, or yearning. He's equal parts irony and honesty, and he takes great care not to be callous when he could be serious. 'Into My Arms' and 'The Ship Song' steal our breath away and we're left in damp darkness hoping to hear his voice again soon. Petals on a wet, black bough.

Tess Carges

ALL THIS REMAINS: BERT JANSCH'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

Royal Festival Hall, London

SATURDAY 4TH NOVEMBER

The stage is set at The Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall for a night of celebration. On what would have been his 80th birthday, key players in Bert Jansch's 21st century renaissance have united to pay homage to the poster boy of the '60s folk guitar scene, the man that Neil Young dubbed the Jimi Hendrix of acoustic guitar.

With a storied bill that includes the likes of Martin Simpson, Bernard Butler and Kathryn Williams, the evening is anything but a humble offering. Yet, the modest production and convivial spirit mustered by compère and comedian Stewart Lee is certainly a fitting paean to an artist who spent most of his career reluctantly receiving admiration.

The tribute is kicked off by Pentangle oppo Jacqui McShee, who promises and delivers a blend of heartfelt interpretations of Jansch's revered body of solo work and a few personal stories about the man behind the music. In a manner that would have likely pleased the undiscriminating artist and songwriter, lesser-known musicians are welcomed to the stage by the likes of Robert Plant who performs a gritty country-rock recital of 'Go Your Way My Love' with his new folk outfit Saving Grace. A particularly moving cover of the traditional folk song 'High Germany' by James Yorkston and Jon Thorne is elevated to breath-taking heights by Ranjana Ghatak's classical North Indian vocals and provides a sense of the boundless influence of Bert's artistry, across both genres and generations.

But the mark of respect is perhaps best experienced via a spirited ensemble of young alt-folk contemporaries and guitar stylists, brought together by The Bert Jansch Foundation to perform a beautiful rendition of 1965 instrumental 'Veronica'. Like a candle against the pane of a cold winter's night, the legacy of Bert Jansch sure burns bright.

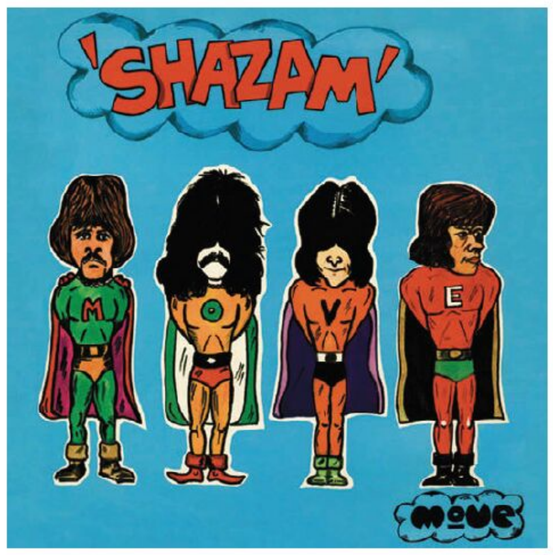
Millen Brown-Ewens

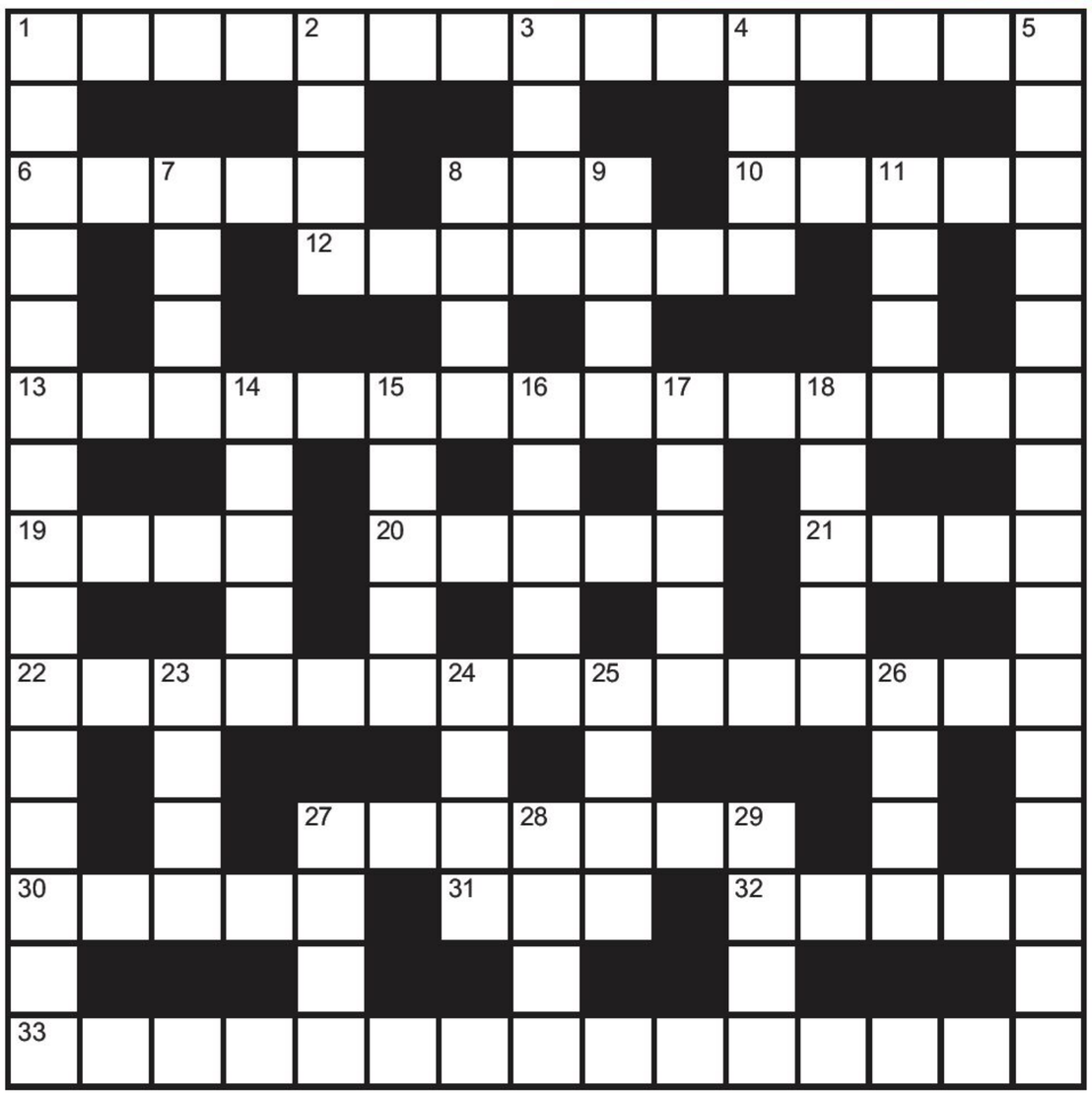
Prize Crossword

by Stuart Draper

Despite being recorded piecemeal across several months of instability and change, **THE MOVE**'s second album – the half originals/half covers 1970 set ***Shazam*** – is generally considered their best and most cohesive work. Pure pop songs meet progressive instrumental work-outs and superb ensemble playing, topped off with a thundering production and amusing between-song dialogue. And we have a copy of Esoteric's new remastered vinyl edition to give away.

To enter, simply send your completed crossword to *Shindig!* #146 Crossword, 40 Windsor Crescent, Frome, Somerset BA11 2EA or email a legible scan of it to win@shindig-magazine.com with the words "S! #146 crossword competition" in the subject line, no later than 4th January. And don't forget to include your name and address!





Across

1 Sponging Melissa madly instructs Sly & The Family Stone not to complicate the music (4,1,6,4)
6 Hellish centre fulfils Love Affair's frontman (5)
8 Logical beginning ends 1971 Hawkwind freebie (3)
10 Set apart from the horniest awkwardly (and appropriately), this label put out a box set for our cover stars (5)
12 Confused Italian gentlemen create Grateful Dead graphic novel (7)
13 "I am not vamoosing!" declares Italian bassist incorrectly – his indefinitive atmosphere was missing for 53 years (8,7)
19 Harsh when The Barracudas put the average ahead of time (4)
20 Left in a pit, this Green Seagull was recently gigging with Large Plants (5)
21 When is done with done with to start all over again with Spiritualized (2,2)
22 The Paisley Patterns surprisingly also do pseudonym for The Last Judgement and guest (8,4,3)
27 Tattered tarantula expels Russian domain - Georgia presumably for Pretty Things? (7)
30 Potentially improbable without peril, The Jam get explosive around Soho (1-4)
31 Happy conclusion to Japanese band has friendly content (3)
32 Paul Revere & the Raiders personify star, go on to give Keith respect (2,3)
33 Avid follower of 500 fronts host of bills for subject of recent Grapefruit comp, reviewed in our last issue (5,10)

Down

1 Goldman cash held carelessly for reclusive Edinburgh singer (7,8)
2 Frightened Animal Collective too in this partial solution (4)
3 Bob the engineer resolved monogamy isn't for many (4)
4 Mostly hearsay, Pete Dello and Friends want to get into your... not an anagram! (4)
5 Burger's band haunt Wm Penn & The Quakers, in the spirit of religious orders (5,2,3,5)
7 An oddly loud but game effort from Ivor Cutler Trio (4)
8 Rebellion curtailed by Troggs' roaring vocalist (4)
9 Nothing if taken in an edited form, Donovan and Euphoria are ever present (4)
11 Semi-idealist provides Bee Gees with lightbulb moment (4)
14 The Coral's cable stung, even omitting around half the letters (5)
15 Wandering Vanian, without mutual assured destruction (5)
16 Can you requires something (as well as something) for Peter Banks comp with most of the BBC on demand service (1,4)
17 Rob left bordello for label home of The Stratfords, after songwriter Kenny and tour manager Chris (5)
18 It's sad, I'm for The Hollies' ruler – the gnik (5)
23 Express chases state once nothings surround welcome (4)
24 The American Breed's half-probable, ready and willing epilogue (4)
25 Perth band cut down upon discovery (4)
26 Octopus finale adds to 40 for Mercury Rev single (4)
27 Cat Stevens' night began when Otis Redding fled aboard (1,3)
28 Message misses post-dawn but pre-comin, just part of an insane world (4)
29 Sniffers come after steamy lead section (4)

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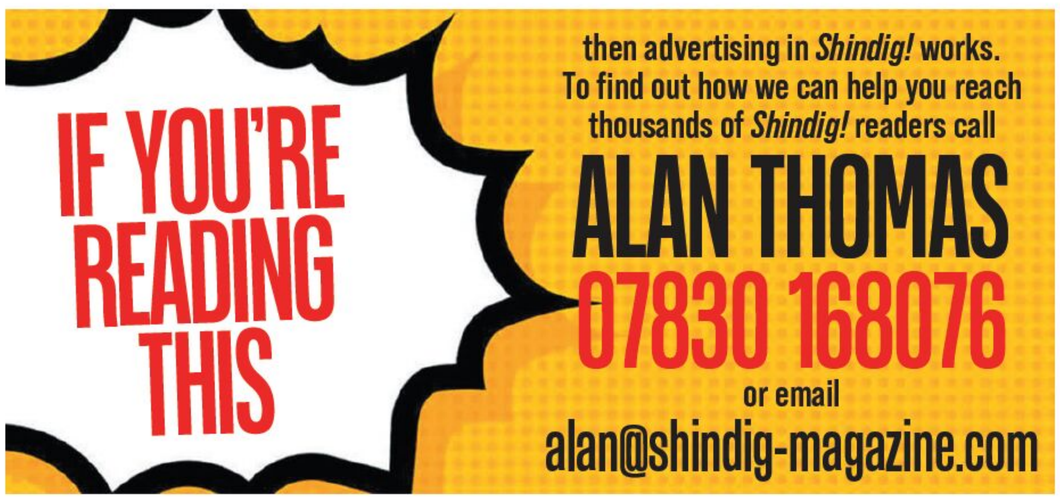

Issue 145 crossword solution

1 M	2 O	D	3 E	R	4 N		5 B		6 S	H	7 A	Z	8 A	M
	R		A		9 A	D	U	L	T		U		M	
10 S	P	I	R	I	T		R		11 O	L	D	M	A	N
	H		T		12 U	N	I	O	N		I		Z	
13 S	E	T	H		R		A		E		14 O	T	I	S
	U			15 R	E	D	L	A	D	16 Y			N	
17 B	S	I	D	E						18 O	M	E	G	A
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20 A	21 L	O	N	G						22 N	A	K	23 E	D
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28 C	O	M	29 E		R		U		E		30 F	O	O	L
	N		R		31 G	E	N	I	E		L		L	
32 B	A	N	A	N	A		G		33 D	E	A	R	M	R
	R		S		34 S	H	E	L	L		M		I	
35 I	D	R	E	A	M		R		36 E	V	E	N	A	S

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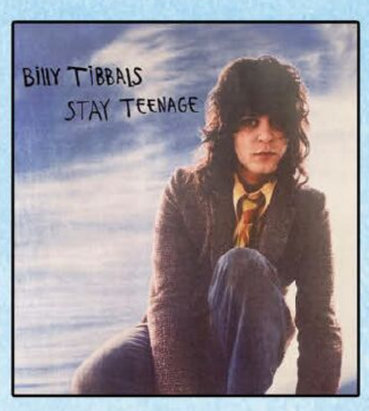

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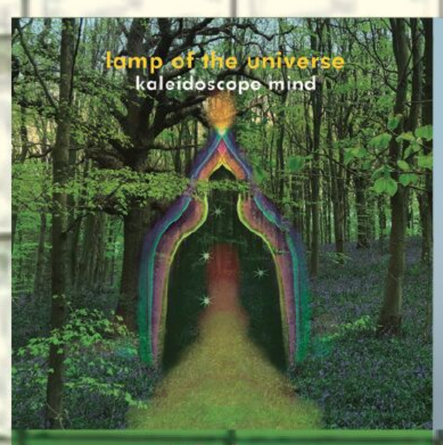

Lamp Of the Universe
Kaleidoscope Mind (LP/CD)

New Zealand multi-instrumentalist and Psychedelic guru Craig Williamson returns with an album of classic tunes. Full of swirling effects and trippy vocal harmonies, this album touches the Psychedelic Psoul.

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An Auditory Mirage of Disorientation and Restlessness Takes Center Stage in Marco Campitelli's Fourth Album, Blending Post/ Art/Kraut/Noise, and Introspection.

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Diesel Cindy
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Szörényi Levente

Utazás

PEPITA, HUNGARY, 1973

FOTÓ: HUSCHIT JÁNOS. GRAFIKA: SZYKSZNIAN WANDA

CHRISTOPHER BUDD takes a trip with a heady Hungarian rule-breaker

Had you, a young Hungarian citizen at the tail end of 1973, desired to pick up a copy of musician-composer-producer Levente Szörényi's eagerly awaited debut solo disc, you would have had a very small window in which to do so. Arriving in stores on the morning of Christmas Eve in its beautiful orange-hued packaging, it was reportedly removed from the racks by noon. Perceiving more than a whiff of drug use in Szörényi's blissed-out comfy corner, the Communist authorities had the album withdrawn with immediate effect, and it wasn't back on shelves until it came wrapped in a new sleeve – one which didn't play up the album's suggestive title. Utazás means journey or trip.

The original cover is the work of photographer János Huschit and graphic artist Wanda Szyksznian, whose own floating eyes feature heavily in the composition. In the early years of their careers, the pair worked together on a number of discs in '73 alone. These included the clever newspaper collage of Szörényi's former band Illés' swansong *Ne Sírjatok Lányok!* [Don't Cry Girls!] and the combined photo and graphics of Judit Halász's debut *Kép A Tükörben* [Image In The Mirror], for which Huschit took an ultimately unused but very period image of Halász with whimsical illustrations of flowers and animals painted on her face.

When it came to the cover for *Utazás*, however, the pair must have realised that even with the Communist government of János Kádár being known as the most liberal in the Soviet bloc, there would be limits to how far they could get away with pushing these tropes. "The Journey is also indirectly about drugs, although I don't know how much Levi had this in mind at the time," Huschit told Hungarian magazine *Recorder* in 2017. "In any case, we played on this a little with the cover: it should be like a crazy trip. I had that kind of past – I could imagine." And he had

"It should be like a crazy trip. I had that kind of past – I could imagine"

the perfect location, an acquaintance's house in Budapest with appropriate hand-painted décor. "It was a cool cover," he recalled, "but it was quickly banned."

In Bence Csatári's 2017 study *Nekem írod a dalt. A könnyűzenei cenzúra a Kádár-rendszerben* [You Write This Song For Me: Pop Music And Censorship In The Kádár Era], Péter Nádori, who in '73 was head of the publishing department in the state-owned Hungarian Record Producing Company, recalls that banning the *Utazás* cover was one of only two acts of censorship his organisation ever actually enacted (the other concerning the apparently political nature of the lyrics in Zsuzsa Koncz's *Jelbeszéd* the same year, the cover of which is also, coincidentally, designed by Szyksznian). However, it's interesting to note that a track which turned up many years later on a compilation by Fonográf, Szörényi's subsequent band, may have been originally intended for *Utazás*. 'Hidd el, ez ő', ['Believe Me, It's Him'], with its overtly religious content, would not have been allowed in officially atheist Communist Hungary.

When *Utazás* was reissued, its new artwork no longer carried the album's title, instead featuring a black & white illustration by István Bányai that emphasised the geographical kind of travel, and with its cameo-like image of Szörényi in shades and whiskers perhaps nodded to the American country influences on the disc. Banyai went on to make several covers for Fonográf before relocating to LA in the '80s.

Despite this minor controversy, the careers of both Huschit and Szyksznian went from strength to strength. János Huschit, who died in June 2023 at the age of 78, will be best known to Shindiggers for his striking composite image of Sarolta Zalatnay that decorates both the sleeve of '73's *Hadd Mondjam El* and Finders Keepers' 2007 Zalatnay compilation. He photographed images for over 100 album covers, including the fabulously attired Neoton Família, and the first Hungarian album sleeve to feature a nude figure in the form of golden-painted saxophonist Marcellina. Wanda Szyksznian likewise designed dozens of covers after her initial partnership with Huschit, as well as creating posters and commercial designs in a long, award-studded career, and is now a professor at The Technical University Of Budapest. Levente Szörényi himself continues to compose and perform as something of a national treasure in Hungary. All of which goes to show that a brief spell in the naughty corner needn't hold anyone back. S!

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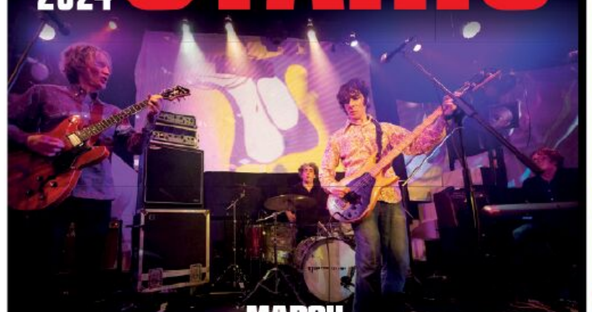

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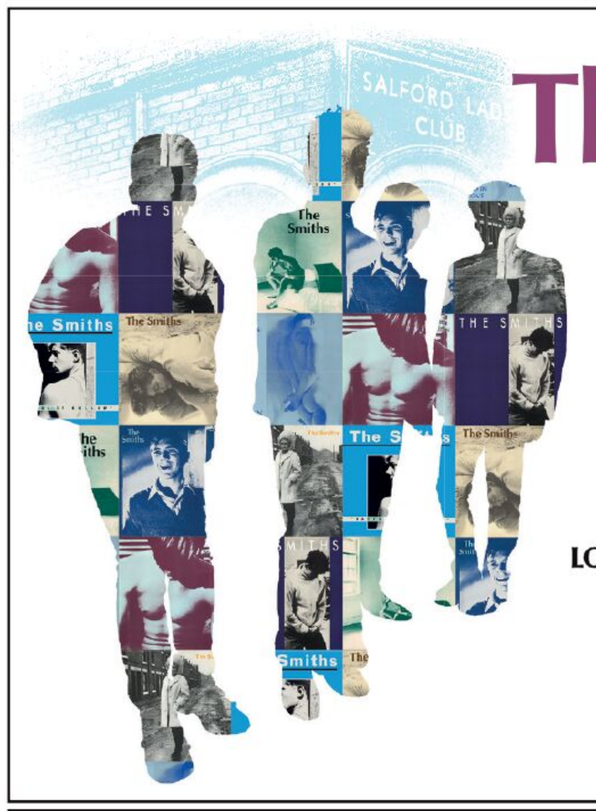

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In which **MICHAEL BJÖRN** investigates worthy albums that have somehow eluded reissue, compilation or acclaim

JEREMY'S SECRET

The Snowball Effect

(Deep Six, UK 1984)

Without smoke and mirrors, it wouldn't be a Colin Lloyd Tucker and Simon Fisher Turner LP. "We use that 12-inch space as a platform to play around with ideas of stories or thoughts, to make something a little bit more intriguing than perhaps it possibly is," says Simon about their approach. "It's not a joke. It's all really seriously done."

Colin and Simon had met via Matt Johnson (of The The) who was Colin's colleague at library music house De Wolfe, while Simon was working at Cherry Red Records. "I was Mike Alway's assistant, but I wasn't very good," says Simon who quit soon after and joined De Wolfe instead. "Colin and I had a shared love of beer, art and music."

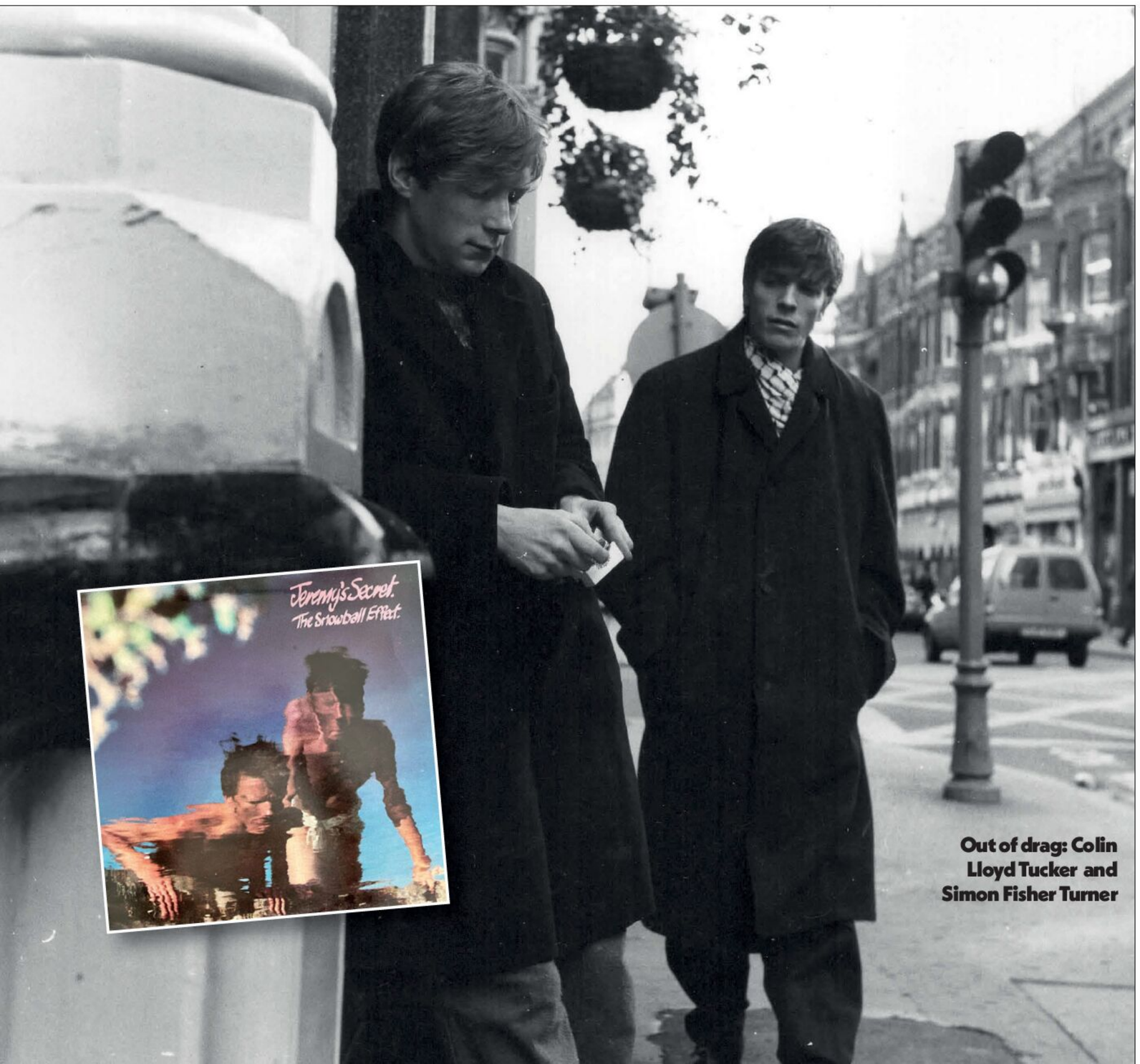
After having made two experimental ambient albums and dressed up in women's clothes at gigs as female French duo Deux Filles, they decided it was time to put vocals first. Hence, the made-up French women mysteriously disappeared on a trip to Algiers.

The Snowball Effect was recorded with a live band at De Wolfe, re-christened Red Light Recording for the event. "It's still sounding fresh, probably because it's mostly live," says Simon. "And I can tell that we were quite out of it." Whereas their initial EP was called *The Key To Jeremy's Secret*, key fobs instead open both LP sides and reappear at the end. "There is no key," says Simon. "That is the key," explains Colin. "But there is a key fob, of course," concludes Simon. Whereas listeners may feel somewhat fobbed by it all, the pop songs remain great, such as the wistful 'Time Winds', the Godley & Crème-flavoured 'The Day The Earth Stood Still', and the hidden, Bowie-influenced finale 'Nakata'. "Just sing anything and sound as though you mean it, and it sounds really great," says Simon. "It's kind of Lewis Carroll nonsense."

The songs are interspersed with imaginative interludes, such as 'Small Talk'. "It was two six-year-old girls doing that, live with a drummer, off the top of their heads," explains Colin. "Girlfriends' kids," adds Simon. 'I Had A Friend' recalls Syd Barrett.

The EG label manager at PolyGram, who was also Colin's manager, wanted to start his own label, and Colin proposed Jeremy's Secret as his first release. "A deal was done with De Wolfe, and he licensed the tapes," says Colin. The cover features a distorted still from an unfinished video filmed at Stoneleigh Abbey by Russian filmmaker Sergei. "Lord Leigh let us shoot there, but Sergei disappeared with the video and the money," says Simon. "What was left after the cocaine bill," adds Colin.

There was no snowball effect on sales and the label released nothing more. What was started as an imagined secret, obscurity transformed into a real one.



Out of drag: Colin Lloyd Tucker and Simon Fisher Turner

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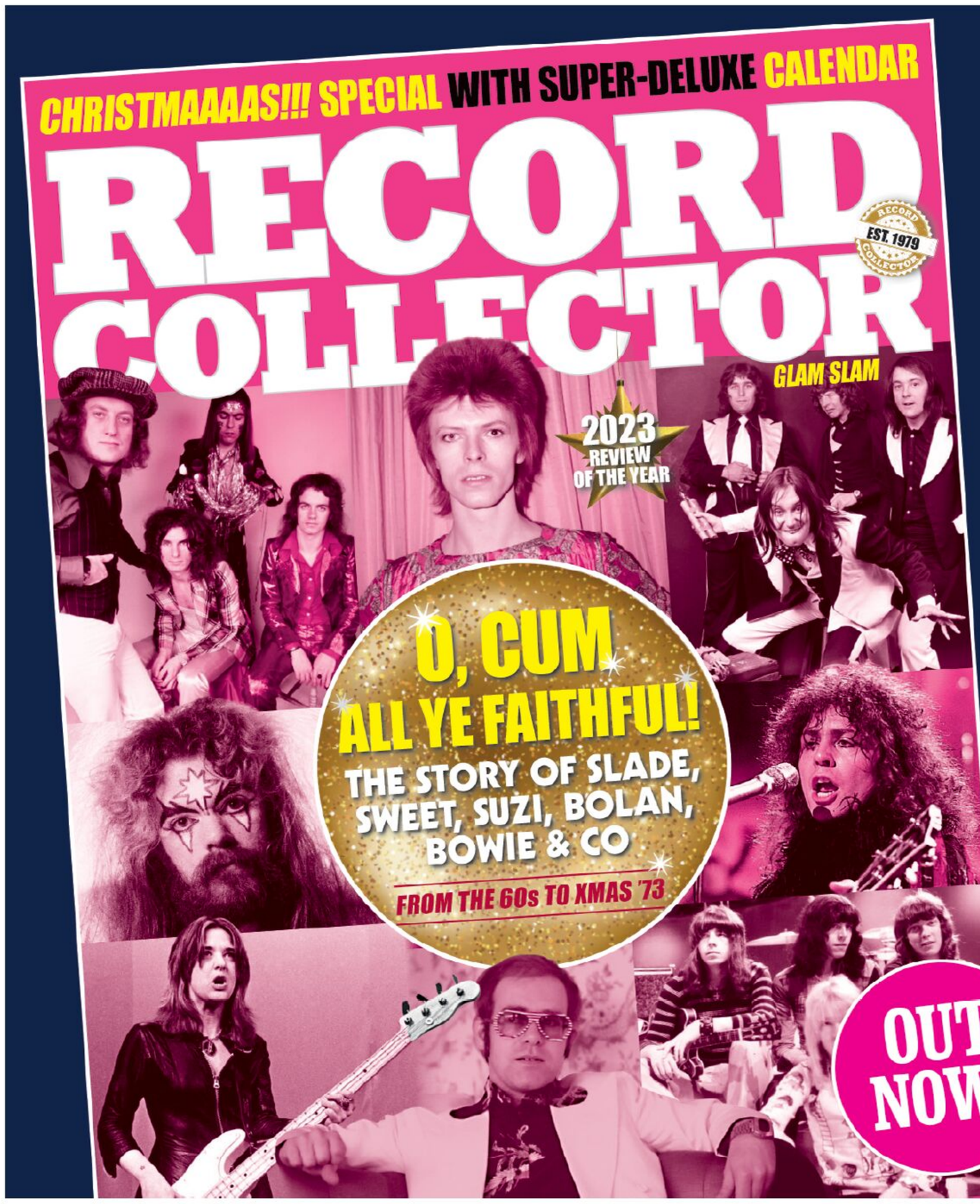

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